Reservations on the Bandwagon *The Editors*

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from Washington ®
June 19, 1976

What Carter's Not

Jimmy Carter has "a streak of ugly meanness—an egotistical disposition to run right over people . . . a disposition to be a sorehead"; that is the recent testimony of columnist Joseph Kraft.

He has "a vein of vindictiveness" says the syndicated columnist team of Evans and Novak; they quote "Carter's old enemies back in Georgia" as declaring that along with intelligence, discipline and dedication there is "vindictiveness extraordinary even for a politician."

So he's mean and vindictive, and likely to be the next President of the United States! How did we get into this fix? But wait, here's contrary evidence:

Sensitive and compassionate analyst Anthony Lewis of *The New York Times* says Jimmy Carter "really does see himself fighting entrenched power, the status quo . . . . He instinctively identifies with the victims of official abuse, the poor, the disadvantaged." Yes, Lewis goes on to say, "He cares about the powerless in society—genuinely, I am convinced . . . "

And here is an unusual character witness, eccentric iconoclast Hunter S. Thompson (*Hells Angels, Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72*) writing in *Rolling Stone* (of all places) June 3, "my first instinctive reaction to Jimmy Carter . . . I liked him" and who notes an extemporaneous speech Carter made in May 1974 to bigwigs in Georgia attacking special privilege; it was a "king hell bastard of a speech" (I assume this is praise); to which Thompson adds, "I have never heard a sustained piece of political oratory that impressed me more."

Let's drop Carter and look at the setting. It's one of the most astonishing political years in history. "The United States has the most elaborate, complex and prolonged formal system of nominating candidates for chief executives in the world," say William Keech and Donald Matthews (Brookings: *The Party's Choice*). A system the late Clinton Rossiter called "a fantastic blend of the solemn and the silly." And this year more than usual. For eight years we have had split government in Washington—White House one party, Congress another—something no other nation could survive; and before Kennedy and Johnson, Ike had six years of split government.

Now there's near stalemate in Washington with Ford's 49 vetoes. Political parties are in decay. Loyalty has so declined that when Richard Nixon wins every state but Massachusetts he still faces a Democratic Senate and House. Republicans are now weaker than at any time since the Great Depression—probably since the party started just before the Civil War.

The national mood? Cynical and penitential; Vietnam and Watergate aren't mentioned but obtrude their frustration everywhere; in 1950 three-quarters of the people thought their government was run primarily for the benefit "of the people" (17 percent said "big interests"); now only 38 percent think so and 53 percent say big interests.

Who would have thought that the Panama Canal could be an issue; that an incumbent President could be seriously challenged; that in 30 dreary primaries only about a third of those eligible to vote would vote; or that an almost unknown former governor and peanut farmer from Georgia could be front-runner for President of the United States?

In 1972 George McGovern revealed to astonished politicians how vulnerable modern parties are to penetration by well-organized and strongly motivated groups in primaries where only a minority vote.

In 1976 there are more primaries, and direct federal financial aid to ambitious political *individuals* (not parties), and Jimmy Carter has shown how porous such parties are to penetration by an ambitious individual whose cause is ambiguous (unless, indeed, "love" and "anti-Washington" are causes) and who offers the sullen nation a fresh face and a striking personality, blazoned by the all-powerful news media.

Jimmy Carter planned it that way. I first met him in the snows of New Hampshire last January and liked him—and was astonished by him. I enjoyed the calculated impudence with which he told what he planned to say in his Inaugural, and reacted with the expected astonishment. I never met a candidate like that before and it was swell copy. The confrontation of Southern and New England cultures was wonderful, too; when the clean-cut YMCA-type young man at Durham made the reticent Yankee ladies cringe by asking Carter straight out, had he been saved?—and Carter answered quietly, yes, that he was a "born-again Christian" and what was the next question?

Carter started his campaign in September 1972 while still governor and, after his term ended, worked full-time at it. He saw the vulnerable place in the primary system—right at the start. It didn't matter if only a fraction of a fraction voted nor if the margin was minuscule, the point was to get the headline "Jimmy Carter Wins." He did that in the precinct caucuses of Iowa, first of the year, and in the tiny state of New Hampshire. Next, of course, he had to knock Wallace out in Florida, March 9, and he did. He was launched. The press grabbed him. In her remarkable series in the *New Yorker* Elizabeth Drew tells how it was done, and her cautious assessment of this "enigmatic and hidden man" who is asking us to take such a big gamble. He can talk about "love" and be tough and even ruthless. Was that a grin, a natural honest-to-god grin, he was giving her at one point (not the toothy smile)?

"It seems to be a natural grin by someone who might, after all, have a sense of humor about himself. It is odd," she reflects, "to spend time considering whether a grin just might be natural." Yes, she notes, Carter may have "a certain mean streak."

George McGovern fired his press secretary, Alan Baron, who was quoted as calling Carter "a positive evil, surrounded by a staff committed to no ideals, like Haldeman and Ehrlichman." This sounds silly and venomous to me. I like him and still do. James T. Wooten put it negatively in *The New York Times*: ". . .He is not a liberal, not a conservative, not a racist, not a man of long governmental experience, not a religious zealot, not a Southerner of stereotypical dimensions," and from such negative deductions many, he says, have concluded "that Jimmy Carter is not entirely unacceptable as a presidential candidate."

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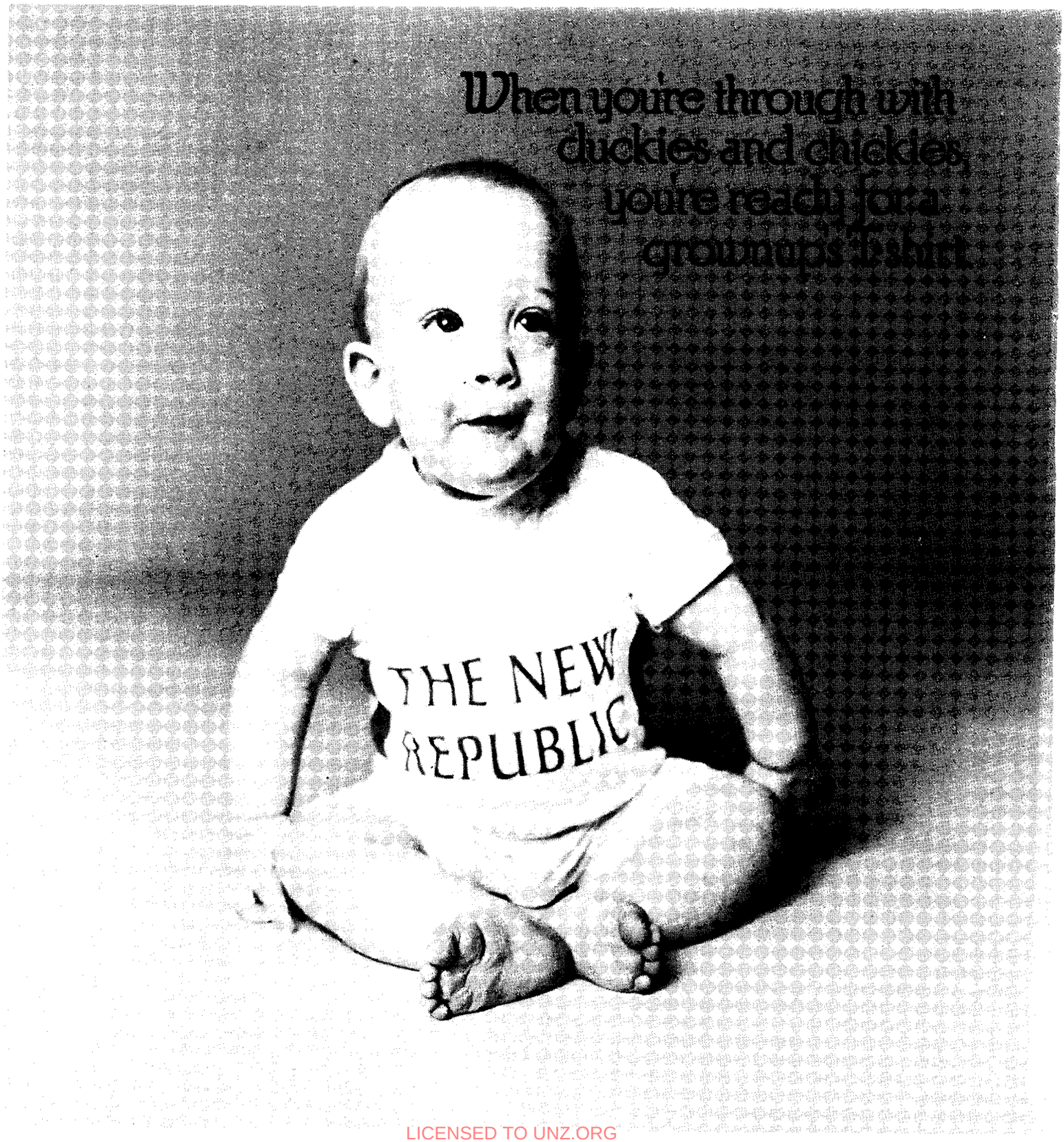

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Reservations on The Bandwagon

The 14th Wednesday morning of the longest primary campaign in history was the last practical moment to make reservations for space on the Jimmy Carter bandwagon. Carter had won one state election and lost two on Tuesday, but the one he won, Ohio, had been arbitrarily designated as the state Carter had to take to clinch the nomination; it was to be the final test of Carter's flagging momentum, and he passed it. California, where more delegates were at stake, was written off; Carter could not be expected to best California's popular governor Jerry Brown on Brown's turf especially after Brown had established his national appeal by beating Carter in other primaries on both coasts. Brown did win his home state, and by a larger margin than anyone expected. New Jersey was a more interesting and complicated case. There, Carter was running with strong support from liberals, blacks, labor and some public officials. He won the preference contest but lost, as he was *not* expected to do, to a confusing hodge-podge slate listed as uncommitted but pledged in fact to Hubert Humphrey and/or Brown. On Monday before the primary, *The New York Times'* headline flatly forecast a Carter victory in New Jersey but the Georgian lost the delegate race to the uncommitted slates three-to-one. In Ohio, designated the "crucial" contest, Carter was opposed by the ever-second Morris Udall, a man he had defeated in eight states, and Frank Church, who siphoned liberal votes from Udall. (Church, it was charged, was really only after a place on Carter's ticket.) Carter got more votes—52 percent—than Udall and Church combined. Why Ohio did the trick will never be clear but it did; the opposition capitulated and conceded the game to Carter. Morris Udall was finally finished; so, he said, was Frank Church. Carter says he doesn't give a hoot about endorsements, but now they've rolled in. In the days prior to super primary Tuesday, Illinois' Gov. Dan Walker came aboard and brought along his two delegates; New York Mayor Abe Beame announced his support, for what that was worth (not much); New Jersey Gov. Brenden Byrne backed Carter (while his state party organization went to bat for the uncommitted-Brown-Humphrey effort). Senators Ribicoff, Gravel and Stone signed up. Then on Wednesday, having announced that he was negotiating with Sen. Henry Jackson, whose name Carter placed in nomination four years ago, Carter picked up the two endorsements that put him over the

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top—George Wallace who released about 170 delegates and Mayor Richard Daley of Chicago who absolutely controls about 90. Walking past City Hall reporters on Wednesday morning, Daley announced that he'd cast his vote in Madison Square Garden for Carter, and what the rest of the Cook County machine controlled delegates did was up to them. The message was heard in room 232 of the Old Senate Office Building in Washington, where Hubert Humphrey thereupon resigned himself to never being President. Joe Crangle began taking the phone lines out of his Draft-Humphrey Committee offices.

So Jimmy Carter will be nominated at Madison Square Garden. His strategy of running everywhere has been vindicated; he entered more contests than anyone else and won more. He amassed nearly three times the number of delegates of his nearest opponent. He finished off George Wallace. Most agree with Sen. Church that he has "established an entitlement." There should be no fratricidal battle of the sort that characterized the 1968 and 1972 Democratic conventions.

Carter is an impressive candidate. His campaign style, his personal record of integrity in office, the aura of reassurance he offers all make his nomination appealing to many Democrats. He holds out the promise of unity, electability, and the possibility of restoring the South once more to the Democratic fold.

But we have some lingering doubts, reservations about the Carter bandwagon, and they are not relieved by prominent endorsements, delegate totals or even the certified inevitability of Jimmy Carter.

For one thing, the primary results are more ambiguous than the delegate totals suggest. Counting Michigan as a stand-off, since early May Carter won only five of 15 primaries, and three of those victories were in Southern states (Tennessee, Arkansas, Kentucky). Carter's mid-season slump raised questions about his ability to survive the exposure of the long primary season. Even on the final day, his opponents accumulated more than double Carter's popular votes. It is therefore not correct to conclude that Carter is the People's Choice. As was McGovern's nomination four years ago, Carter's success this year is a victory of strategy. McGovern, said Carter at the time, understood the rules of the game better than anyone else and applied them to his cause. It was only by running everywhere and taking what he could get wherever he ran, that Jimmy Carter was able to accumulate enough of a lead to survive the trailing-off of support toward the end of the primary campaign.

The late slippage leaves Carter's most important asset, his electability, somewhat in doubt. Will he be able to keep his lead in the polls over Ford and Reagan until judgment day in November? Election day polls showed that against President Ford, Carter would attract only half the voters who supported his primary opponents—along with an equal proportion of those who voted for Ronald Reagan in the GOP primary. With his many victories, Carter still runs behind Hubert Humphrey among likely Democratic and Independent voters by a margin of 22 to 19 percent.

Unless things change in the weeks ahead, as the party's standard bearer, he will represent an unusual coalition. The latest Harris surveys show the future nominee popular among Southerners, small town dwellers, conservatives, middle-of-the-road voters and independents, not so popular in the heartland of the traditional Democratic constituency, among Easterners and Midwesterners, big city residents, labor union members, Jews and even among blacks to whose votes Carter owes several of his early primary triumphs, and, arguably, his nomination. Such polls are guideposts for Jimmy Carter in the days ahead, days which must be spent consolidating his candidacy in constituencies where he is now weakest.

There are also persistent indications that Carter has not successfully laid to rest the charge that he is imprecise on issues, both vague and inconsistent. In the days before the last primaries, he declined an opportunity to testify personally before the party's Platform Committee, then at the urging of former Ohio Gov. John Gilligan, Carter stated the conviction that this year's platform should consist of no laundry list of specific promises and commitments. Among the items he hoped to exclude were issues that have dominated debate in the primary campaigns—federalization of welfare, relief for the cities, national health insurance.

Nor did his special five-minute paid TV talk to the nation on three television networks (time purchased for the avowed purpose of rebutting charges that he was less unspecific on issues) reconcile his own conflicting stands. Carter has been both fuzzy and contradictory, changing what he says from time to time and place to place. Voters in the early primaries understood Carter to say that the *first* piece of legislation he would send to Congress would initiate a complete overhaul of the federal bureaucracy. Those in later contests listened as he dodged requests for specifics from opponents and newsmen, claiming that it took him a whole year to study even the state government of Georgia. He refused to give indications of what agencies might be eliminated or consolidated.

In campaign advertising Carter said, "I support restrictions on the right of a single company to own all phases of production and distribution of oil." But, while bidding for the oil vote in Texas, Carter (according to the Associated Press) said, "I think I am the only candidate who hasn't called for divestiture of the oil companies."

On the hustings, Carter was for cancellation of the B-1 bomber program because it is "a too expensive and unnecessary new system." But when he visited the Strategic Air Command headquarters in Omaha, he announced that he would continue research and

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development funds, because "it might be that after I become President I would change my mind."

Mr. Carter says he does not want a Democratic platform that amounts to a "wish box or a Christmas tree of unrealistic promises." Well enough. We do not agree, however, that the platform should avoid specific commitments and deal only with general principles. Unsure where Carter comes out on tax reform, on the union shop, on deregulation of natural gas, on federalization of welfare, on busing and neighborhood desegregation, on defense spending, on oil divestiture, on aid to the cities, on amnesty for deserters and draft resisters, on nuclear energy proliferation, and on national health insurance, we think the platform should at least spell out for Mr. Carter what the party thinks about these matters. That's not the conventional way of doing things, perhaps, but it is not a conventional situation either. It's not always easy to make a President listen, so, while you have his ear, why not speak your piece? Besides, it might just prove helpful to Carter in the campaign ahead, a campaign in which liberals will be participants. Jimmy Carter has support from voters who feel strongly on both sides of key issues. Even if it were possible to conduct an effective and successful national campaign against either Gerald Ford or Ronald Reagan by appearing to liberals to be a liberal, to moderates moderate, and to conservatives conservative, we need a President who is not a chameleon.

Monitoring Helsinki

"The main thing now is to implement in practice all the principles and understandings agreed upon in Helsinki," said Leonid Brezhnev at the 25th Soviet Communist Party Congress in February.

The Party General Secretary did not except from his sweeping commitment the so-called "Basket III" of the Helsinki Declaration containing the human rights provisions that add up to "the freer movement of people and ideas." Indeed, he specifically referred to this section of the Declaration. Yet, ever since the Kremlin joined 34 other powers of Europe and North America in signing the historic declaration on August 1, 1975, its commitment on human rights has been observed in the breach. Harassment of Soviet Jews seeking to emigrate has been stepped up. Arrests, police interrogations and military conscription of applicants have become common.

In May, a new device was instituted. Those who intend to seek an exit visa must give up their apartments even before applying to emigrate. A letter from 15 Jewish activists sent to UN Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim spelled out the implication: "If a visa is denied, which is the usual procedure of the Soviet Government, the applying family is left . . . without a shelter from the elements."

Nor have other parts of "Basket III" been implemented as promised. Signatories of the declaration, for example, are required to "facilitate" the contribution of "national minorities." The fact, of course, is that Jewish cultural and institutional life in the USSR is all but totally pulverized. As for the "movement of ideas," the Kremlin's barriers are as resistant as ever. The repression of dissenters has intensified while press attacks upon Andrei Sakharov continue unabated. The crackdown was briefly extended to a newly-formed nine-member group of Soviet citizens who had the temerity to urge Soviet "fulfillment of the Helsinki accords." At the same time, high Kremlin officials and the Soviet media maintain a constant drumbeat of criticism directed at those in the West who emphasize the "human contact" provisions of Basket III.

Regrettably, the Helsinki Declaration provided no mechanism for bringing compliance. The only action the signatories agreed upon was to hold follow-up meetings at which implementation and other means for advancing détente would be considered. The first such meeting is scheduled for Belgrade, Yugoslavia in 1977, probably in February. Devices for monitoring the fulfillment of the Helsinki Declaration are, therefore, of central importance if the document is to have meaning. Thanks mainly to the efforts of Rep. Millicent Fenwick and Sen. Clifford Case, New Jersey liberal Republicans, and with the assistance of Rep. Dante Fascell, a Democrat from Florida, monitoring machinery will shortly be set up in the United States.

The administration responded with scant enthusiasm for the project. The promotion of human rights abroad hasn't been a priority item, especially when it carried a congressional tag. Yet determined opposition to a Republican-sponsored initiative would have appeared unseemly, especially during an election year when the administration's détente policy was being subjected to continuous verbal assault.

The Case-Fenwick legislation was adopted by the Senate on May 6 by a voice vote and approved by the House 240 to 95 on May 17. However reluctantly, the President signed the legislation early this month. It establishes a 15-member commission "to monitor the acts of the Helsinki signatories . . . with particular regard to the provisions relating to Cooperation in Humanitarian Fields." Six are to be appointed from each house of congress (four Democrats and two Republicans) and three are to represent the administration—one each from State, Defense and Commerce. As of this writing, Senators Case and Buckley have been appointed to the Republican Senate slots. The commission is authorized to hold hearings, subpoena witnesses and documentary evidence, and submit reports to Congress. As its proposed budget of $350,000 requires separate approval in an appropriation bill—anticipated in late June—the monitoring body

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is not expected to come into existence until August. The documentation it accumulates should be available for the Belgrade meeting of the Helsinki 35 next year.

Were the Congressional initiative duplicated by other signatories of Helsinki and similar monitoring mechanisms set up elsewhere, the Belgrade conference could be transformed into an implementation organ, at least to the extent of marshaling world opinion against egregious violations of human rights.

Divorce and Feminism

Love is Not Enough

The divorce rate (as recently reported by the National Center for Health Statistics) was up again in 1974. One out of every 50 married women were divorced that year. The new statistic continues an upward trend in divorces that began after World War II and escalated in the past decade to more than double the 1965 figure. It calls up a depressing picture of broken homes, disappointed adults and suffering children. Some societies (those organized on kinship lines) are well-equipped to handle such emergencies. When there's a break-up of the nuclear family, each of its former members has some place to go. This is not so in America—"going home to mother" or father is out of fashion; in any event aging parents may have nothing to offer but a room in an old-age home. The increasing divorce rate then has grave implications for the stability of our society. What is to blame? Some commentators think they have found the culprit. They have seized upon the trend and all its implications, labelled them the product of the women's movement, and proffered them as evidence of what they perceive to be the movement's ultimate outcome: destruction of the family.

The charge that the movement, through achievement of its goal of equal rights for women, will ultimately destroy family life has been heard before. People like George Gilder (author of *Sexual Suicide*) and Phyllis Schlafly (titular head of Stop ERA forces) have been mouthing it for years. Today, however, the old charge is being made with new fervor and effect. When believed by voters, it has been a potent force at the polls, accounting for the defeat of state equal rights amendments in New York and New Jersey last November. The charge is, nevertheless, specious. In fact, the women's movement and family life are compatible and can coexist. What the movement opposes is not the family but rigid, sex-based role delineation within it, specifically the casting of the wife, because she is female, as an economic dependent for whom cooking, cleaning and child care are the only appropriate work, and the casting of the husband, because he is male, as the economic provider and power center of the unit. The movement takes the position that both spouses should share *all* the family's work, subject only to obvious biological limitations (men can't bear children), and sees family life as a partnership of equals. Far from destroying family life, the movement shores up well-founded families; they grow stronger as their members grow in independence, self-reliance and self-esteem. Spouses who have these qualities live together because they believe in each other and in their joint undertakings, not because laws or mores require it or because they are afraid of fending for themselves.

What is the real explanation for the increasing rate of family dissolution? It is the simple but distressing fact that most families are not well-founded. Their lack of foundation has nothing to do with the women's movement. It is attributable to two other notions that our society continues to teach and reinforce through all the authorities it has at hand—parents, teachers, books, advertisements in all the media for every kind of commodity or article of commerce. The first is that mere sexual attraction—some call it "love"—is a sufficient foundation for marriage and building a family. The second is that free choice is vitally important in everyday life.

"Love" is exalted by constant telling, retelling, embroidering and embellishing of the Cinderella stories. Always the principals are strangers; at first meeting instant sexual attraction renders them unable to part—we say they "have fallen in love"—so they marry. Always this "love" that they have is the one bond between them. Always it is described in glowing prose, drawn in brilliant color, and said to be unique, consuming, lasting and capable of conquering all.

The second theme—the importance of free choice—and its corollary—the ever present possibility of correcting a wrong one—are similarly hammered home. The message is given variously. We are urged to trade in our new cars for better ones, change our college majors from physics to government, our habits from smoking to nonsmoking, our careers in midstream, our hair color each week, our companions, clothes or schools as the mood strikes us.

The teaching has been successful. We now view "love" as the only honorable basis for marriage and founding a family and free choice as the only honorable basis for selecting a mate and reason for sticking with the selection once made. Thus we raise our eyebrows and exclaim in horror at any match that seems to have something other than "love" as its basis (*e.g.*, Kennedy-Onassis), or at any interference with a couple's free

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choice (*e.g.*, Princess Margaret's forced renunciation of Peter Townsend). The trouble, however, is that "love" is ephemeral—it can pass—and choice, though important, must have limits. When "love" is the sole basis for a marriage there is nothing left when it fades. No residue of respect, friendship or mutual dependence between the spouses remains to act as a family foundation. Instead of staying together and trying to build a foundation that could support the family's continued existence, the typical modern couple, believing that every choice, including their earlier choice of each other, is revocable, gets a divorce. The 1974 statistics confirm a pattern of early exit from marriage: of all divorces in that year, 31 percent were granted after less than four years of marriage, 40 percent were granted after less than five years and 66 percent were granted after less than 10. The median duration at the time of divorce was only 6.5 years, a drop from 6.7 in 1972.

The exaltation of "love" as a basis for marriage and the emphasis on free choice in picking, and staying married to, a mate now operate together to increase the number of poorly founded families and to hasten their dissolution. If we hope to rescue the family from the ascending divorce rate and to restore its former stability, we must retreat from these widely accepted notions and substitute others. I suggest five: first, marriage is *not* for everyone but only for those who want to found families and are prepared to work at and stick to it; second, there are more important reasons for marrying than sexual attraction (primary among them is that marriage to a certain person is likely to satisfy the needs of the family so founded); third, "love" should never be the only reason for a marriage; fourth, resort to divorce is often no more than extreme self-indulgence; and fifth, divorce, though it should continue to be available, is not an acceptable remedy for marital mistakes of the usual sort. Indeed, social disapproval in some societies (*e.g.*, American Indians) has made divorce, though available, rare.

As chief harbinger and disseminator of this new learning, I suggest the women's movement. Self-interest requires it to spruce up its image. By announcing its support for well-founded, enduring families in which committed spouses, as equals, work out their own roles, the movement could accomplish a fantastic coup. Such a platform would, at once, open its doors to those who are now its worst critics—women who have devoted their lives to the family and see it and themselves threatened; and destroy the utility of its critics' best weapon—the false charge that equal rights for women can't be achieved without an accompanying wake for the family.

Judith T. Younger

Mrs. Younger is professor of law and deputy dean at Cornell Law School.

White House Watch

Back to Reagan

The inquiries that resulted in a piece in this journal's previous issue about "Reagan's half-truths" turned up some examples of what Ronald Reagan and his people consider to be President Ford's distortions and deceptions. They will be noted before returning to Reagan's greater talents and sins in this respect.

Possibly excepting the President's recent assertions that he can and Reagan can't win the general election, nothing infuriates the Reagan staff more than the impression that Ford and Reagan are equally and identically opposed to gun control. Both of them oppose registration of guns and gun owners; both make the absurd argument that guns don't kill people—people kill people; and both advocate mandatory additional prison sentences for felons who use guns in the commission of crimes. When asked about this by gun nuts, as he often is when he invites questions from citizens, Mr. Ford usually confines himself to the sort of reply he gave April 30 at Lubbock, Texas: "I am opposed to the registration of a gun owner. I am opposed to the registration of firearms, period." The Reagan complaint is that the President never voluntarily mentions an administration bill that the Department of Justice

"What a nightmare! I was given the Inaugural and blew my lines."

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drafted and after much difficulty persuaded Sen. Hiram Fong of Hawaii and Rep. Robert McClory of Illinois to introduce last year. When somebody else mentions the bill, the President encourages the notion that it merely restricts the importation and assembly of the cheap, foreign-made pistols known as "Saturday night specials." As a Reagan staff study says, the bill "would ban the manufacture, importation, assembly, sale or transfer by *any* person of *any* model of handgun, new or used, unless the model has been approved by the Secretary of the Treasury" and would penalize violations with up to five years in prison and $5000 fines. It's actually a weak bill, far short of what real and adequate gun control would require. But it's enough to outrage hordes of voting gunnies and is the target of a direct-mail campaign that Ford workers suspect but haven't proved to be a Reagan operation. One of the marvels of this political season, incidentally, is that nobody has asked either Ford or Reagan to explain just how a federal requirement that gun owners and purchasers register themselves and their guns would violate anybody's civil and constitutional rights, including the constitutional "right to bear arms."

There is no doubt that the Ford forces went to the outer limits of propriety with their exaggeration, amounting to distortion, of a couple of Reagan remarks about the Tennessee Valley Authority and Rhodesia. In Knoxville, TVA's headquarters city, a television interviewer recalled that Sen. Barry Goldwater lost many votes for himself in 1964 by proposing to sell TVA's electric power facilities to private industry, and then asked Reagan: "If elected President, would you go along with that kind of argument, Governor?" Reagan answered in part: "Well, you are asking a question involving a gigantic combine of gigantic interests . . . and to say that I know all of the facets and details in that, I don't think I could give you an answer. But it would be something to look at and first of all to make sure that the citizens were the beneficiaries of anything of that kind." It was a careless and silly statement, the kind that Reagan's assistants despair of teaching him to avoid. But it hardly justified the President, campaign chairman Rogers Morton, Sen. Howard Baker and Reps. James Quillen of Tennessee and Tim Lee Carter of Kentucky in joining in a blitz of suggestions that Reagan had as good as proposed on the eve of the Tennessee and Kentucky primaries "to sell TVA."

In the course of arguing that the US should try to mediate between the ruling white minority and the subject black majority in Rhodesia, instead of denouncing minority rule and calling for black majority rule as the President and Henry Kissinger recently did, Reagan remarked June 2 in Sacramento that the use of American troops to prevent racial conflict might be a possibility and added: "Whether you'd have to go in with occupation forces or not, I don't know." It was another foolish statement, and Reagan soon retracted it. The Ford campaign committee blanketed California with television and radio ads saying: "Governor Reagan could not start a war. President Reagan could." President Ford said in Ohio that "my Republican opponent did indicate that he would think about stationing American military forces in Rhodesia." The Ford campaign committee issued denunciations of Reagan's "frightening" statement in the names of Vice President Rockefeller, Secretary of Commerce Richardson, Gov. Milliken of Michigan, Rogers Morton, Sens. Griffin of Michigan and Baker of Tennessee, and the President's brother, Tom Ford. The California ad was hardly the "absolute fabrication and misstatement" that Reagan said it was. But it and the accompanying blasts made excessive ado about very little.

No fuss at all was raised about an infinitely more frightening and dangerous argument that Reagan made in an interview with the Associated Press and, a few days earlier, in a conversation with me. Supporting his familiar contention that the Ford administration and the Democratic Congress have let the US fall behind the Soviet Union in military and nuclear strength, Reagan told AP reporter Walter Mears that a Soviet invasion of Western Europe could leave the US with no recourse except "the one thing that none of us wants at all, the nuclear button. The day we push the nuclear button, we [will] know that we do not have the nuclear superiority we once had, we don't even have parity." That is arguable and, when put in over-simple terms of numbers, technically accurate. The frightening and dangerous factor is the thought in Reagan's mind behind the sort of language he used in the AP interview. I know it's in his mind because he came right out with it in his talk with me. After invoking the specter of Soviet invasion, much as he had with the AP, he said to me: "What would be left to us is only one thing, the nuclear button, which no one wants and [my emphasis] *which I doubt if any American President would use under those circumstances.*" So far as I know, no American President and no serious candidate for the presidency has said anything like this since Harry Truman placed Western Europe under American nuclear protection with the North Atlantic Treaty in 1949. If Reagan doubts that he said it to me, he has only to have his sound technician play back his tape of the conversation.

Our study of Reagan's little ways concludes with a tale of taxes. Last April 20 President Ford issued a remarkably full statement of his income, taxes, assets

COMING: Will the US be ready for the next embargo?

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and liabilities for the years 1966 through 1975. Reagan had issued a much less detailed statement in February, failing among other things to distinguish between the federal, state and local taxes he had paid. When he was asked during a San Diego television interview on May 27 why he didn't disclose more than he had, Reagan answered in part: "We have a law in California about disclosure. I complied with that law. I think it's all that's required of a public official to assure the people that there's no conflict of interest in any way connected with the office he has or the office he seeks. As a matter of fact the White House contacted the Treasury Department after my release and tried to get more information and Secretary of the Treasury Bill Simon informed the White House that I had complied fully with the law and [done] all that was required."

Well, I asked Secretary Simon about that and was told a story that's more interesting than the Reagan version. According to Simon: the White House had never asked him and would never have dared to ask him for tax information about Reagan or anyone else. What happened was that he discovered upon returning to Washington from a trip that Press Secretary Ron Nessen and the President himself were publicly suggesting that Reagan ought to make as full a disclosure as the President had made. Simon was outraged. He protested at a White House staff meeting that Ronald Reagan had the same rights of privacy that all citizens had and certainly had every right to disclose as little or as much as he pleased about his income and taxes. Simon insisted that the official needling of Reagan cease and he says it ceased. My impression is that Nessen and Mr. Ford, when asked about the matter, still manage to get over the idea that the President is more frank and open about his finances than Reagan is.

John Osborne

By David Pryce-Jones

Anyone who likes games of chance should be watching President Hafez Assad of Syria. He is a most consummate player in the casino which passes for Middle East politics, and right this moment his mixture of cunning and force and luck is weaving rings around everyone in sight. Not since Gamal Abdel Nasser in his flush of youthful intrigue has anything quite like it been seen in that part of the world. Lebanon was the public arena in which Nasser then chose to wage the Arab cold war. Western intervention saved Lebanon at the time, but in today's changed world the blind eye rules. If the destruction of Lebanon is still the price to be paid for inter-Arab feuding, then that's just too bad. In 1958, Egypt might have picked up the pieces; in 1976, Syria.

Perhaps Assad deserves to succeed, simply for having kept a cool head so far. Most of his predecessors in office would have been irresistibly tempted to annex Lebanon outright, no matter what the cost, in the conditions prevailing since April 1975, when fighting between Christians and Moslems first offered a pretext. Piecemeal, tragically, the Lebanese state as it has evolved since independence from French rule in 1943, has been expiring. More than 30,000 people have died. (Algerian sources estimate at least 50,000 dead or nearly two percent of the population.) Central institutions, including the army, have ceased to function. The country has reverted to a primitive anarchy i which local leaders and their followers or dependent pursue narrowly defined interests.

In practice this means that the historic conflict o Christians and Moslems flares up in modern guise. Labels of right wing and left wing are falsifications imposed by Westerners who assume that other people's politics must be like their own. It is possible to transfer allegiance from one confession to another, but those who do are numerically and politically insignificant. The Rejection Front, for instance, the radical grouping of dissident Palestinians who altogether reject Israel's right to exist, is led by Christians, but that only makes it even more suspect to Moslems. Partition along religious, and even clan, lines already exists on the ground. Traditional sectarian loyalty is really all that a

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Lebanese has by way of identity, and it does not extend far. The senior civil servant in charge of the administration of Palestinians in Lebanon, himself a Sunni Moslem, once told me that he did not mind where the Palestinians went so long as they left his country.

The Christians made a mistake which there is no retrieving; they believed that they were militarily stronger, better prepared and more cohesive than they were, with influential friends in the West to fall back on. They set to battle with light hearts. The Moslem opposition turned to Syria as to a natural protector. Syria had always argued that Lebanon was one of its rightful provinces. Was not Assad of their faith, and in the forefront of revolutionary progress as well, allied to the Soviet Union in the struggle against Western imperialism and capitalism? Assad prevaricated brilliantly. He has under his control and pay some Palestinian clients, the Saiqa guerrillas and the so-called Liberation Army, and he released them to police Lebanon. Not enough, in other words, to stop the situation worsening, but too little to upset his Arab rivals, Israel or America.

Notice having been served in this way that Syria respected the nuances of power politics, the Christians did their best to rise to the occasion. Suleiman Franjieh, president of Lebanon and a Christian as by constitutional arrangement he has to be, was obliged to give way, though kicking and screaming to the last as hard-liners do, to Elias Sarkis, a man approved of in Damascus. But political compromises of the kind were not what the Moslem opposition had in mind at all. They had smelled blood. A strange alliance they have been too, of the Shia minority, Communists, self-appointed mercenaries, Palestinian groups financed by Iraq and Libya—if they have a nominal suzerain, it is Kemal Jumblatt, who has long been a frustrated maverick in his ambitions, and has much to answer for in this crisis. As a Druze, he is condemned to be leader of a small but hardy minority, and cannot aspire to the highest offices. He is not the first millionaire landowner who has tried to broaden his base by declaring himself a Socialist and obtaining a Lenin peace prize for it. Confident that the Syrians, and behind them the Russians, could be manipulated into supporting him, he made one ceasefire after another unworkable.

Yasser Arafat calculated along parallel lines. His Palestine Liberation Organization had been obstreperous enough to cause civil war already once, in Jordan. He was anxious that the same disaster should not overtake the PLO in Lebanon, the one and only country which still offered a base for operations. Clashes with the Lebanese authorities had been violent in the past. It was the armed and apparently uncontrollable Palestinian presence which had thrown out the delicate Lebanese balance in the first place. What the Christians and conservative Moslems resented was the way Arafat had involved Lebanon in his fruitless skirmishing and terrorist endeavors, not only attracting Israeli reprisals but disturbing such settled fabric as there was in society with his sloganizing. He sensed the danger of leading an unloved minority, but decided to make the most of his prominent position in the Moslem opposition bloc. It may have seemed inconceivable that the Syrians could really discard him and the PLO, which they had sponsored and exploited so often and effectively in many a tight spot before.

That is what has happened, and a fine Byzantine *renversement des alliances* it is too. Christian morale collapsed in almost South Vietnamese style after several massacres of their community; they were no longer able to give as good as they got. Refugees took to the boats and flights out. None of the Western powers, traditional protectors of Christians in Islam, lifted a finger for fear of reprisals through an oil embargo. Even the Pope, who managed to correspond with Bishop Capucci in a Jerusalem prison for smuggling arms on behalf of the PLO, had little to say about developments in Lebanon, save the proffering of his love—which may not in the circumstances have been a useable commodity. Having exhausted their stockpiles of weapons and ammunition, the Christians failed to find adequate suppliers outside Eastern Europe, which leads to the suspicion that the Russians may be playing one side off against the other. Frightened for their lives, the Christians had only Syria to turn to for protection—and so it is that Assad has Lebanon where he wants it. For entirely different reasons, Christians and Moslems have appealed to him. He can act the impartial statesman. Regular Syrian troops have invaded, ostensibly to protect a beleaguered minority of Christians facing slaughter. It is in fact a simple extension of Syrian influence, violently executed.

Kemal Jumblatt has had the spoils removed from under his very nose, and for the first time in months he has had to forget the smell of blood and make approaches to the Christians, suddenly pretending to care at this stage about Lebanese independence. Yasser Arafat is also far from welcoming his Syrian brothers-in-arms, linking them now with Zionist conspiracies and worse. He too has been driven toward hated rivals, in his case George Habash of the Rejection Front, in order to see whether the two of them can salvage anything for the irredentist Palestine cause. They cry betrayal, they assume militant postures. Perhaps they really did deceive themselves that the Syrians were nothing but fraternal crusaders. The moral is that when Syrian national aims are at stake, the restoration of Palestinian rights must look after itself. At the United Nations Arafat may be a celebrity, but in Beirut he is a leader of busted street-gangs. And to be on the safe side, Assad arrested over a hundred Palestinians and their sympathizers in Damascus who might accuse him openly of treachery.

By reflex action, the Palestinians have appealed to Cairo for succor, a procedure which ended by obtaining

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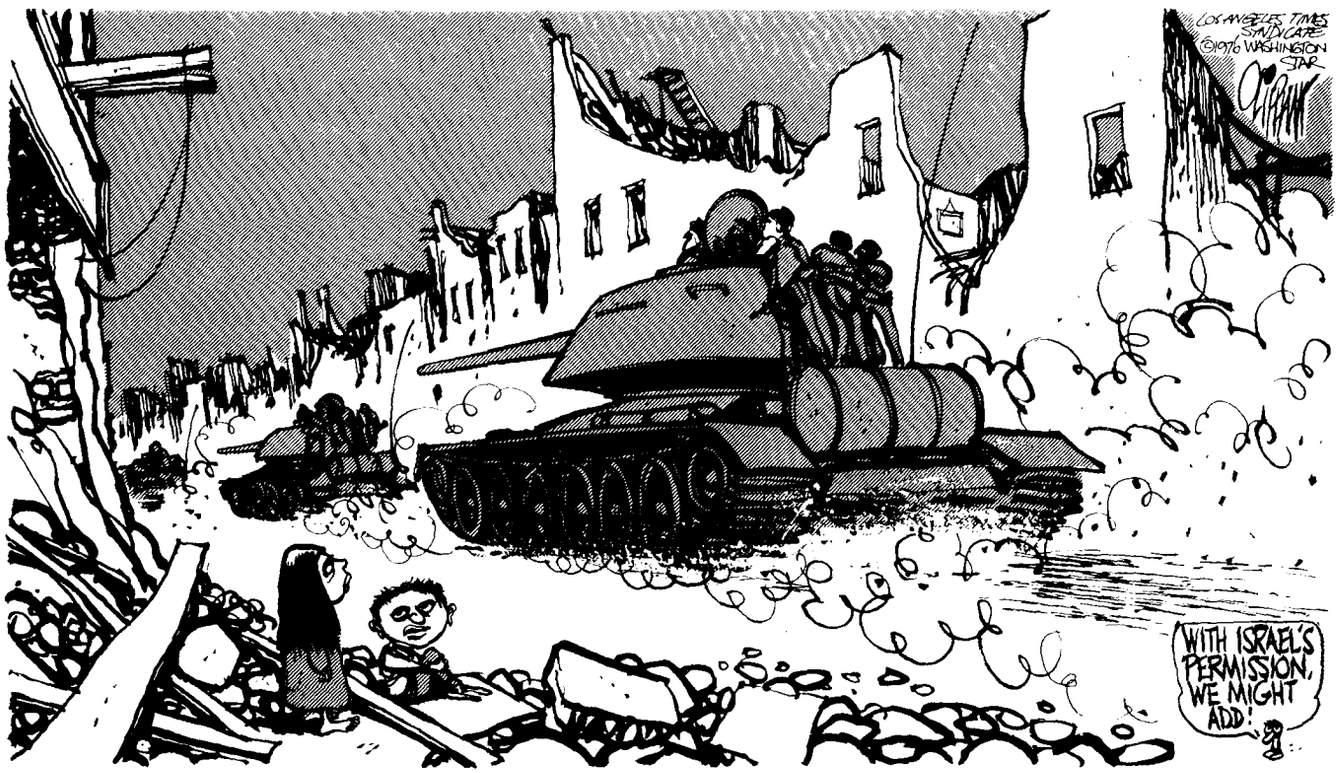
the comforting words of the United Nations. President Sadat may chuck them a bone or two; his misgivings over Syria's military and political enhancement remain to be tested. Iraq has a grievance that Greater Syria is a step closer to reality. Some sort of *club des réfusés* between Iraq, Libya and Algeria may emerge, all in the name of Palestinian solidarity, and with Russian blessing. In the normal co-ordinates of the inter-Arab cold war, all these governments will no doubt try to reanimate their various friends and factions in Lebanon. The whole country has been a training ground for every Arab ideology. It is miserable whenever the opportunities of a democratic structure, even one so imperfect as Lebanon, are used to ruin it.

In the short run Israelis may consider that this clash between Syria and the PLO is a happy spectacle. But just as it suddenly came about as a matter of expediency, so it may vanish. Every Lebanese sect and confession has lost out in these 15 dreadful months of civil war. All of them have been at the mercy of their sponsors and backers. Should Syria manage to find some face-saving formula all round and establish itself as the permanent governing presence in Lebanon—as seems likely for the time being—it may wish to help the PLO again, if only for fear of any other Arab government doing so. In any case, a Lebanon subordinated to Syria is not in Israel's wider interest. Put simply, Jews dare not expect to fare better than Christians in the Arab Middle East. Minorities are all under sentence. That's, of course, why the Israelis may seem skittish; they would not be wrong to see the Lebanese death happening as an indication of what their enemies would do to them if they could.

Over the past year Israel has been threatening in certain circumstances to take protective action by invading southern Lebanon. Some imaginary "red line" is supposed to be the point beyond which Syrians should not approach. Dropping the Palestinians, Assad has had the extra triumph of calming, or more properly neutralizing, Israel. The risk he ran in respect of the "red line" probably never matched the noises made by the Israeli government. Condemnation of any Israeli movement across the Lebanese frontier in self-defense would have been absolute—in marvellously ironic contrast to the tacit shrug of world approval to Syrian movements across the Lebanese frontier.

President Assad's future approach to Israel will be that much the stronger if he can keep the lid on everybody and everything in Lebanon. In order to try conclusions, he can take advantage of his new position to negotiate a deal *à la* Sadat. Security in Damascus, he might reason, no longer depends on the immediate or full recovery of the Golan Heights. But a further irony: he might demand as part of some bargain that Israel make concessions to the Palestinians which he himself would never contemplate, and so recover the Palestinian goodwill lost through *realpolitik*. What if he proposed non-belligerency with Israel on condition that a Palestinian state on the West Bank was set up without delay? And would he necessarily share the fetish of the fashionable that the PLO is the chosen vessel for the hopes of those in the territories?

The West Bank is the last place where the PLO can make a bid, its final throw. Whether the West Bank is



"They're Syrian troops in Russian tanks, entering Lebanon to rescue the Christians from the Moslems—and don't ask me to repeat that."

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more or less vulnerable to outside Arab interference than Lebanon will soon be seen. Many of the new mayors of the West Bank towns have certainly made public pronouncements favorable to the PLO. The process whereby they were chosen as candidates was connected with the Lebanese fighting in the sense that the old order was giving way everywhere, and the West Bank also wanted to be keeping up appearances. For all the rhetoric and radical top-dressing, however, this is still a conservative society. The mayors may be new, but they are not quite the break with the past that they proclaim themselves to be. They are representatives of their clans or families, as usual, and for another they show no willingness to forego the subsidies from Jordan which enable them to hold the Israelis at arms' length. In private, they are in the same relation to Jordan and Israel as the outgoing mayors were

PLO funds on any large scale would certainly alter the sophisticated give-and-take which everyone has perfected since 1967, but even so, as recent West Bank disturbances and riots have shown, the only available weapons are stones and burning tires. Nine people have died there, distant casualties of the Lebanese fighting (and of the ritual hysterics at the UN) rather than of the Israeli occupation. There may well be more, sadly, for as the PLO and the extremists in Lebanon are brought under Syrian control, they will have no other outlet. They are in the habitual Palestinian position of being able only to call down a curse on everybody. That much at least is unchanged.

Robert MacNeil si, Martin Agronsky no

News at PBS

by Eliot Marshall

Two years ago Richard Nixon and his media toughs left office, and this summer public television is just beginning to recover from the Nixon trauma. For the first time in several years, the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) and its parent, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), are testing some new ideas that could improve news and documentary coverage and make public TV more exciting.

The spearhead of the current drive is an ambitious "public affairs package" being offered in several pieces between now and November. Local stations have been asking PBS to put together such a package for some time because they lack the resources to do it themselves. Now they will get one. But in order to launch the news plan, PBS executives are making some compromises and picking their way through a political briar patch that private broadcasters never deal with. Rescheduling the network format is a task that requires diplomatic skill. Progress is slow.

PBS still smarts from Nixon's crusade to make public TV safe for Americans. The new president of PBS, Lawrence Grossman, said as much in a speech this May to the International Radio and Television Society. "There is no doubt," Grossman said, "that public television could and should be doing a lot better and a lot more public affairs programming. But we did go through a rough period during the Nixon years, when there were some in Washington who thought that public television should do no reporting and carry no public affairs documentaries. And our money has been tight." Things are beginning to change, he said. But he implied that PBS had learned a lesson. This time it will be cautious.

The care with which PBS is rearranging its schedule can be seen in the way it planned what Grossman calls the "foundation" of its public affairs structure: a nightly news analysis show called "The Robert MacNeil Report." The best place for the nightly news is in the 7:00 or 7:30 pm (eastern) time slot, for that's when the commercial TV news ends and people are likely to switch to PBS. There was a problem, however. Until recently that valuable time slot belonged to "Evening Edition," a political talk and interview show chaired by Martin Agronsky. His program has been running for five years, though only recently on the PBS network. Agronsky is a tough and able interviewer who worked for all three commercial networks before moving to public television. He believes the ratings indicate that his show is more popular in its local market (Washington) than its competitor, the MacNeil Report, is in its market (New York). But he wasn't asked to join MacNeil's nightly news program, and as of July 1 his

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own "Evening Edition" is being bumped off the air, to be replaced by MacNeil. (PBS doesn't have comparative ratings for Agronsky and MacNeil.) The mechanics of Agronsky's bumping are explained later. Grossman couldn't be reached last week. But in a briefing for reporters on May 26, he gave an inkling of what was involved. He described the two new anchormen of the MacNeil Report as objective outsiders, emphasizing the fact that MacNeil was "Canadian-born" and that the other host, Jim Lehrer, was "Texas-born" and a journalist who "knows that Washington is a place most people come to and eventually go back home from." He added: "With these two, there is no danger that the new public affairs strip will be provincial or unbalanced." PBS does not want insiders analyzing the news, and Agronsky apparently has the reputation of being one.

Not long ago, public TV executives could design the network format as they wished and offer it to member stations as a *fait accompli*. Now because of Nixon's reforms they must operate "democratically." This means, for one thing, that most network shows must either win substantial private backing or else be approved by a vote of PBS member stations. This is why PBS couldn't simply ask Agronsky to step aside and then replace him with MacNeil. The system is too snarled for that.

There are essentially three ways to put a show on the PBS network. The simplest is to pay full production costs and offer your proposal to the network free of charge. This approach can be sweetened by adding a dash of free advertising, which in addition to promoting the show helps the local station. Some of the best programs, though not the most controversial, are produced this way. Among those fully funded by private companies last year were a journalism review called "Behind the Lines" (IBM), the "Best of Evening at the Pops" (Martin Marietta), "Black Journal" (Pepsi), "Masterpiece Theater" (Mobil), "Music in America" (Exxon) and "National Geographic" (Gulf). Eight of the 14 corporate-sponsored series were financed by major oil companies. Three other series were funded in full by agencies of the federal government, four by nonprofit foundations and eight by the independent (but federal) Corporation for Public Broadcasting. The remainder were joint ventures. "The Adams Chronicles," for example, received help from the National Endowment for the Humanities, Atlantic-Richfield, the Mellon Foundation and WNET-TV of New York, which is heavily backed by the Ford Foundation. PBS headquarters in Washington, DC screens all proposals of this sort and decides what will and will not go on the network. According to the PBS research office, no clear guidelines have been written to help PBS in sifting the grain from the chaff.

The drawbacks of this method are apparent. Precisely because public TV is starved for funds, it responds eagerly to outside subsidies and suggestions for new programs. Mobil and Exxon, with buckets of cash to dispose of, have no trouble producing shows of high quality and getting them on the PBS network. Do they also control the content? A pamphlet put out by PBS gives a blunt answer: "They do not. First the public television stations and their national membership organization, the Public Broadcasting Service, decide that a particular program or series is desirable; then financial support for the program is sought—often from corporations or foundations. At all times, however, control of program content remains in the hands of the station, independent producer, or whatever organization is actually producing the program." But experience shows that this ideal is not always adhered to. What happens when a station manager agrees with the complaints of a sponsor? Sam Holt, the producer of a controversial public TV documentary on veneral disease called "VD Blues" came under heavy pressure by a private backer (3M) to make his show conform to its standards of good taste. Another awkward thing happened last year. Mobil sponsored a well-received series called "The Way it Was," a history of great moments in sport. In the list of credits, the producing station (KCET of Los Angeles) listed Mobil executive Herbert Schmerz as one of the production staff. Schmerz is Mobil's chief ad man in charge of public TV and also the champion of Mobil's price decontrol crusade that places mini-editorials in the pages of *The New York Times, The Washington Post* and other large papers. PBS itself is aware that corporate backers don't have the purest motives in sponsoring public TV. Companies like programs that will enhance the corporate image, but not draw unfriendly fire, and they spend a lot of money on audience research. Gulf Oil, for one, has paid thousands of dollars to find out through Neilsen and Arbitron who watches its "National Geographic" program.

Corporate account managers have been wary of any but the safest shows. That may explain why few news shows are underwritten by private companies. The spokesman for WNET in New York, Leonard Mayhew, gives this analysis of company motives: "The corporations, when they got into public television, were obviously trying to present themselves in the best possible image. They're after people's good will. Nobody is going to attack them for presenting good drama or good dance or good music, whereas if they're associated with a program that offends some segment of the population, that doesn't seem like a good result to them."

The second way to put a show on the PBS network is to sell it to the local stations around the country through a cooperative market called the "station-program cooperative" or SPC. However, the SPC hasn't been very kind to news shows either. Public stations are poor by commercial standards and often hard-pressed to find material to fill dead airtime. Every purchase must go a long way. So in the cooperative they

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tend to opt for shows that have proved themselves already or will fill large chunks of time at little cost. This year, for example, only 28 of the 70 programs offered on the SPC market won enough votes to become network shows.

This explains in part why "Lilias, Yoga and You" ($96,000 for 52 half-hours) did well while "Bill Moyers Journal" ($405,000 for three hours) did not. Agronsky's "Evening Edition" lost out, though it is relatively cheap ($646,000 for 260 half-hours). Other interesting proposals that failed this year were "Front and Center"—a series of interviews with famous people by Bill Moyers and George Will—and "Mother's Little Network"—a spoof of a news and variety show done by Boston's WGBH. One that just barely scraped by was Ingmar Bergman's "Scenes From a Marriage," which won enough votes at the end, and will be shown in six parts this season.

The SPC system isn't wealthy enough to take risks. Jonathan Rice, program director for KQED in San Francisco, said recently: "The lowest common denominator plays too big a role" in determining what goes on the air. "There are programs that go on and on because they're safe and they do pretty well . . . But there's no substantial money in the system for experimentation or investigative journalism. That's too expensive. If SPC had twice the money . . . then the system would be adequate. The wealthier and the braver stations would take a chance."

Criticism from Rice and other managers of big-city stations may have prompted PBS to change tactics. Both the Ford Foundation, public TV's most generous supporter, and the federal Corporation for Public Broadcasting are planning to end their aid to "democratic" programming. Rather than pour more money into the SPC cooperative, they are shifting their emphasis to centralized planning by the network at PBS headquarters. Rice, for one, would be pleased: "It's quite enough democracy to have a program manager at PBS whom you trust, whom you can fire by vote if he does badly. I've been here 22 years . . . and if I do badly I'm firable and should be fired. But I don't have to ask 10 people if I can change the schedule tonight. And I wouldn't know how to do that anyway." The Ford Foundation's subsidy to the SPC comes to an end next year, and at the same time federal support is dwindling—from five million dollars in 1975 to three million dollars this year and nothing in 1977. The SPC will have to pay its own way.

This leads to the third method of getting a program on PBS. This year new programming money is being poured into a third and more centralized marketing route called SAM, for Station Acquisition Market. It is really the special exceptions market. Last winter William Buckley threatened to leave the public TV system and market his show ("Firing Line") independently because he believed the cooperative was treating him badly. He was granted a SAM. As a result, "Firing Line" was offered to network subscribers in December, several weeks before bidding in the cooperative began. This was a generous favor to Buckley, for he was not forced to compete with shows like Agronsky's "Evening Edition" and the other PBS fare, which fought it out to the death in January. Agronsky was not given this favor; in effect he was made to play by the rules while Buckley was not. Similarly, Bill Moyers' show was marketed through SAM last year because it was revised in mid-season, and, for other reasons, a series of films from the Janus collection was sold through SAM this year. Just last week, after the cooperative bidding and voting had ended for 1976, SAM was used again to sell the Robert MacNeil Report. This time, however, it's not being used to manage a crisis, but to promote an entire public affairs package. PBS says it chose this route because the MacNeil show wasn't ready to be sold when the cooperative was voting earlier this year.

Donald Quayle, vice president of CPB in charge of programming, said last week there has been no change in marketing styles. The funders of public TV, both federal and private, never intended to give continuing support to the cooperative, he argued. Their goal is to help new ideas and programs get started and then, after a test period, to let them sink or swim. Agronsky's show wasn't dropped: it succumbed to the law of the jungle. SAM isn't being used to promote MacNeil and central programming: it's merely being used to sell shows that couldn't fit into the normal schedule. According to Quayle, the MacNeil Report and other parts of the public affairs package will eventually have to win buyers in the cooperative or go off the air.

This package, heavily subsidized by the Ford Foundation, CPB, the National Endowment for the Humanities and two established public stations—WETA in Washington and WNET in New York—is being sold with standard Madison Avenue techniques. "The MacNeil Report," the thin end of the wedge, will be given free to all users between June and September. Then the pressure will be on, for in September the local stations will be asked to begin paying for MacNeil (at least $1 million in costs to be shared among them). They will also be asked to take the rest of the package, including a new half-hour interview show each week with Martin Agronsky and an hour-long documentary done by an independent producer one Friday a month, both of which may be free during the first year. The funding for these programs hasn't been arranged yet, nor has the format. But the Ford Foundation has committed itself to providing $1 million to finance 12 to 15 independent documentary producers, whose work will presumably be shown on Friday nights at PBS. This vote of confidence is meant to reassure the local stations that the proposal is serious. Whether it succeeds or not depends on what the PBS members decide between now and the fall.

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A Future Held Ransom by Gunmen and Bombers

Northern Ireland

by J. Bowyer Bell

For the most part, summer in Ireland has been a season of mists and soft skies, the green countryside dotted with tinkers and ruins. The tourist board stresses fishing and golf and unspoiled beaches. And for much of the island and most of the tourists this will be the case: a quiet time of easy ways, a land of pleasant people and uncertain weather where time runs a little slower. For others, especially those in Ulster, Ireland is a cruel and bloody arena. No tinkers or ruined castles but gunmen and bombed pubs. Like the inevitable rain, murder has become accepted, certain, unavoidable. So far in 1976, the deaths from explosions and shootings average one a day and are running ahead of deaths on the road, which is always a vital indication of serious political turmoil. And, more to the point, most observers foresee an escalation. In the words of a spokesman of the Provisional IRA, it will likely be a long hot summer.

For the Provisionals the time has apparently arrived to give up the pretext that they are observing a unilateral ceasefire and return to the gun. The primary reason is that the British authorities, having tried practically every form of political initiative except a royal visit, appear determined to ease out the British army and allow an increasing proportion of the slack to be taken up by the police (Royal Ulster Constabulary, RUC) and the Ulster Defense Regiment (UDR), a militia force. Although many loyalists see this as a harbinger of an ultimate British withdrawal—the IRA does not. But they regard it as a maneuver to ensure a sectarian war that will require a continuing British presence. Although the UDR was established six years ago as a community force, there are now probably no more than 200 serving Catholics out of a total of nearly 8000 volunteers. There has been, moreover, evidence that some members of the UDR are also members of Protestant paramilitary groups like the Ulster Volunteer Force—ill-organized vigilantes dedicated to random assassination and no-warning bombs in Catholic pubs. The RUC, too, is largely Protestant. Neither force is particularly well trained to fight a real insurgency campaign. The RUC at 9280 full- and part-time police is 26 percent below strength and the UDR has only 1550 full-time members. There have been suggestions, of course, by loyalists to beef up *their* security forces and by Conservative politicians in London to create a new and more effective Ulster security force. The Provisionals' Army Council decided to challenge what they see as a British attempt to manipulate the Ulster situation. The IRA thus declared an open season on the RUC.

On Saturday, May 14, a small IRA armed service unit crossed the border from the Republic of Ireland at Belcoo in County Fermanagh and ambushed a two-man UDR patrol. Before they withdrew without causing any casualties, they planted a land mine at the point of the ambush, aware of British security and search procedures. The subsequent RUC patrol detonated the land mine and an RUC constable and two reserve constables were killed instantly. Another RUC constable was shot and killed in an ambush near Warrenpoint. It was the start of a spate of weekend violence that cost 11 lives. It is now almost inevitable that an effective IRA attack on the security forces engenders violent retaliation by the loyalist paramilitaries. Although IRA policy is to oppose counter-retaliation, especially random retaliation, the army council often has only tenuous control over the volunteers in the field. The result has been a cycle of tit-for-tat killing. The green and pleasant Irish countryside, the beautiful hills, twisting lanes and tidy fields have become a deadly battlefield. War has come to the Irish countryside, a vicious, anonymous and cruel war that shows no signs of abating.

Larger sectors of the southern part of Ulster are all but controlled by the IRA. To talk of the Republic of South Armagh is not simply a quip. RUC patrols drive at 60 miles an hour with orders not to stop. British army forces appear in force or not at all. The danger of snipers is so great that helicopters remove the garbage from British military posts. In many of these nationalist areas, the IRA is conducting an almost classical rural guerrilla campaign. The introduction of the elite British Special Air Services counter-insurgency troops has only resulted in a series of incidents where hot-pursuit led the British into the Irish Republic. It is not the IRA-British confrontation or even the IRA attacks on the police that have appalled the distant and the immediately threatened; but the growing toll of innocent civilians, innocent of all but their faith. Stretching across southern Ulster is the Murder Triangle where Protestant paramilitary gunmen have murdered the isolated and vulnerable and the Catholics have replied in kind.

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Several tiny towns have been bombed repeatedly, men have been shot down before their families, car bombs have gone off in village squares, shops, restaurants and offices have been hit. In August 1975, a minibus carrying the Miami Showband was stopped, the members taken off, lined up and machine-gunned to death. An unknown group soon thereafter stopped a workers bus, let the one Catholic aboard go, and machine-gunned Protestants who had been lined up by the ditch. In the mixed areas everyone is vulnerable. And the killings go on—one a day, and the bombs go on—four a day. Ane no one can see an end to a violence that is rapidly becoming institutionalized or hope for a population that is divided, brutalized and beyond compromise.

The war in the countryside and in the ghettos of Belfast and Derry is only one aspect of the Irish troubles. The Provisional IRA struggling in Ulster during a campaign of attrition took the war to England or, in some cases, Irishmen fought it there for them. The British bombing campaign—the IRA second front—has not been especially effective. No-warning bombs in British pubs have horrified and alienated public opinion. A great many operations simply failed through incompetence, and most of those involved have been arrested, tried, convicted and imprisoned. What has happened is that the Irish troubles, so long only on the evening news, have come to Birmingham and London. And understandably the public wants *something* to be done. Much the same problem has arisen in southern Ireland, where from time to time Ulster loyalists have detonated no-warning bombs. The Dublin government has tended to see the culprit as not so much the Northern Protestants but as the IRA, whose operations provoked the bombs. In Dublin the politicians threatened by the ancient loyalties of some of the Irish population, by the dreadful prospect of a real sectarian war in the North, and by the activities of various subversives, too, have felt that *something* must be done.

If the brutal murders in the country lanes of Armagh have no real lesson to teach elsewhere, the response of two democratic countries to revolutionary violence may have. In both Britain and Ireland, public opinion, as far as such things can be gauged, responded to provocation and massacre with outraged indignation. In London there was a demand for the return of the death penalty by many Conservatives—no matter that perhaps only the IRA would benefit by the creation of patriots on the gallows tree and that even the police had no interest in such a maneuver. What did evolve after a particularly grisly pub bombing at the end of 1974 was new, anti-terrorist legislation that gave the police new powers that from a distance hardly seemed necessary. During the violence in mid-May, the RUC held 18 suspects under the Prevention of Terrorism Act, but holding suspects for seven days without filing charges was hardly going to prevent future terror. In both Northern Ireland and the Republic, formidable emergency legislation had long existed. In Dublin, however, the Minister of Justice Patrick Cooney and his cabinet colleagues insisted on a further Criminal Law Jurisdiction Act that many see as unnecessary and likely to remain a permanent weapon in the hands of an authoritarian government long after the present troubles have ended. Cooney insists that unusual times and a demonstrable subversive challenge demand the State adopt a policy "as tough as their opponents." Thus the Provisional Republicans' Easter commemoration parade was banned, took place anyway, and has led to summons for practically the entire leadership of the legal political Sinn Fein party. Cooney notes that "the Government's first duty when faced with violent attacks on its institutions is to strengthen its laws. As a consequence there may have to be a derogation from laws protecting the freedom of the individual . . ." Americans are all too aware that some politicians have difficulty in distinguishing between attacks on institutions and on party or even personal aspirations. In the Irish case Cooney's insistence that such laws should be temporary and subject to review, while splendid in theory, suffers from the government's refusal to accept just such an amendment. More distressing, the campaign for law and order has seemingly encouraged members of the Irish police to adopt most dubious practices—persons suspected of a major and political train robbery insist that they were brutally beaten and presented with detailed confessions to sign. If they're telling the truth and if this is the sort of thing that was meant by being as "tough as their opponents," it is an ill omen for Irish democracy, not to mention Irish stability.

In fact most of the omens are ominous and most of the comfort that can be given is cold. The Provisional IRA, according to a member of the army council, is content that the anti-RUC campaign is paying dividends, that the police do not want to be in the front lines; furthermore, internal pressures within the organization are building up. Many IRA men want an escalated campaign, want more bombs in Britain. Some close to the border in the Republic of South Armagh see little reason to tolerate arrests and internments in the South while shooting the RUC in the North. The

COMING: Roger Morris
on US policy and
looming race war
in Southern Africa

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Protestant paramilitaries in turn have promised a campaign of retaliation—and there is no reason for them to deny themselves soft targets in the South. After regularly releasing British soldiers found in the South, the Irish recently jailed eight SAS men for a border incursion. For the loyalist that's sufficient evidence that Cooney's law and order campaign is a façade. And in London there is fear that bombs in Birmingham or Liverpool will produce a violent backlash against the resident Irish population and begin a chain reaction that could cause untold damage to British society. Yet London has run out of political initiatives. Each elaborate and lovingly constructed proposal has collapsed in Ulster. There seems no center in Northern Ireland. Those who attempt to find the middle of the road have been run down and destroyed. The future is still held ransom by gunmen and bombers. Guns and bombs can kill only so many but in the process they threaten to destroy two open societies. In Ireland, laws, however Draconian, cannot create order as long as there are those who see existing order as institutionalized injustice. Those concerned not especially with Irish matters but rather with liberty and justice might consider that perhaps in the face of provocation less is more, and freedom more precious than retaliation.

The New British Leadership

Callaghan and Foot

by Donald R. Katz

The most exciting public event to happen in Great Britain in the past few months took place in the House of Commons. After a heated debate and a very close vote, the venerable aura that Churchill called a "sense of crowd and urgency" was shattered as Conservative front bench spokesman Michael Hezeltine seized the ceremonial royal mace and waved it at jubliant Labour MPs who had just started singing "The Red Flag." A series of unprecedented fistfights followed and the sitting eventually was suspended.

The second most exciting public event was the triumphant return of the Rolling Stones after three years in tax exile. Indeed, *The Times* compared their greeting to "the sort of rapturous welcome usually reserved for the end of world wars."

Possibly, for certain Britons, the third most exciting happening was the accession of Leonard James Callaghan to the position of prime minister of Her Majesty's government. There has been no talk of a honeymoon, no "new sense of purpose," no perceptible "buzz of anticipation," not even a breeze from the winds of change. Callaghan is just the new man running Britain's charge down its inclined plane.

Yet there were moments during the Labour party election when the seemingly simple passing of the mantle from Harold Wilson to Jim Callaghan was threatened by a strong challenge for the post from Employment Secretary Michael Foot. In the midst of the three-ballot runoff, the conservative *Economist* magazine castigated the Callaghan style as one predicated upon an unwillingness to do anything until some time after it was seriously needed. But the specter of Foot, a charismatic left-wing veteran, brought a more hysterical response. *The Economist* forecast a further drop in the value of the pound and even contended that as prime minister Mr. Foot would "opt at crisis time to make Britain into an Argentina."

The final vote, 176 for Callaghan and 137 for Foot, was close enough to saddle the new prime minister with an ideologically opposed deputy leader. Foot is now Lord President of the Council and Leader of the House of Commons, a job that carries with it some power for a man with a personal following. Foot will be responsible for organizing the government's legislative programs. The election highlighted the continued divergence of philosophies within the Labour party, while presenting fractious elements throughout the party with two public men—both avuncular symbols of opposite backgrounds, styles and thought—around whom they could rally.

Both Foot and Callaghan entered Parliament as members of that mysterious 1945 generation of Labour politicians which so confused and worried Americans at the time. (How could they do that to our friend Winston

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Churchill?) Both men belong to a modern Labour party that was shaped by the experience of the depression, unemployment, the General Strike of 1926 and the war. Neither, by any stretch of the imagination, is the stereotypical modern politician—the lawyer or technocrat, who has risen to prominence in European politics during the past 30 years—they are both products of Britain's singular process of political socialization; a process that somehow produces an Oxford-trained intellectual as a spokesman for the Labour left, and a working class hero as a spokesman of the center-right.

Jim Callaghan wholly believes in his party. He has worked his way through the highly structured Labour hierarchy without the benefit of any higher education—to say nothing of an Oxford education, which every prime minister after Churchill has had. He is a conservative man in that his pervasive power base at the grassroots of the party has continually given him both an excuse and an imperative for restraint. His party philosophy resembles the often stagnant ideas associated with American urban populism. He has been called a machine man, a "monument to power." He has been directly compared to the mayor of a certain midwestern American city whose Irish ancestry is the same as that of the new prime minister. He is a popular man, but his backslapping style obscures an occasionally autocratic manner. Callaghan's power is tied up in his ability to cater to and thus deal with the average man. People in his Cardiff constituency still refer to him as "Big Jim" or "Jimmy Cal-Again." He is a man of the people.

Michael Foot, in his own way, is a man *for* the people. His background and education deny him that class-based moral edge that is so important in the British system. Callaghan's tough, calculated pragmatism is an interesting contrast to his new number two's romantic egalitarianism. Foot's power is a result of his ability to make people believe him. In this, he is a master of a dying art. He made his name by shooting gaping holes in legislative policies that he felt infringed upon people's freedom. Foot is a member of Britain's premier political family. He was born in 1913, one year after Callaghan, with an instant political future. His father was a Liberal MP during the 1920s. Two brothers sit in the House of Lords. One, Hugh Foot (now Lord Caradon), was British permanent representative to the UN from 1964 to 1970. Another brother, Sir Dingle Foot, was solicitor general under Harold Wilson. A young nephew, Paul Foot, is the well-known editor of the *Socialist Worker* newspaper. Everyone in Britain knows about the Foots. The family is well spread out along the wide political spectrum to the left of center. Over the years this has spawned many hackneyed observations about "the other Foot" and, of course, the comment that "the right Foot doesn't know what the left Foot is doing."

After leaving Portsmouth Northern Secondary School at the age of 17, Jim Callaghan went to work for the government as a clerk. This was quite an accomplishment in light of an early childhood spent in relative poverty. By distinquishing himself at various union jobs and by catching the eye of the influential Labour party intellectual, Harold Laski, Callaghan eventually was chosen to run for Parliament in 1945. He went on to hold cabinet offices that logically constitute the ultimate grooming process for a British prime minister. He was variously in charge of the Treasury, the Home Office and the Foreign Office. Taking into account Great Britain's progress during these years, however, it is quite illogical that a man in such high office should still be in politics at all.

As Harold Wilson's first chancellor of the exchequer from 1964-1967, Callaghan became the great defender of British sterling. He was eventually left holding the bag as Wilson continuously resisted tremendous pressure to devalue the pound. The delay played a major part in Britain's subsequent saga of economic problems: there was a run on sterling, the imposition of import controls, and a humiliating three-billion-dollar credit extension in 1965. Britain's staccato cycles of inflation and recession proceeded to baffle even the more cynical sages of economic tuning. The personification of all this misdirected monetary policy was Callaghan. So when devaluation finally came in 1967, Callaghan was shuffled out of the Treasury and moved to the Home Office, which proved a more amenable showcase for his talents.

Many people think that Callaghan's handling of the early days of the troubles in Northern Ireland saved him from getting fired. His actions in cooling the situation gained him new public respect. When Labour again took over in March 1974, Callaghan became foreign secretary. Callaghan likes the United States; he also likes Henry Kissinger. Kissinger endeared himself for life to the new prime minister by making a special trip to show up at a ceremony that made Jim Callaghan a freeman of the city of Cardiff.

One liability for Callaghan in running against Michael Foot was that the contrast showed how much Callaghan has been involved in Britain's problems. If there has been a "decline of Britain" since World War II, then James Callaghan is a man of that decline. The period at the Treasury was an unmitigated disaster; his redemption in Northern Ireland is plausible only as long as you do not look at the state of the place today. Certainly, Britain's international posture is less evident than ever. A foreign secretary in modern Britain—even a Labour man—must always deal with the scars left by the country's diminishing power.

Nonetheless, many people in Britain still believe that Callaghan is the right man for the time. He is in a good position to play it safe. His popularity with union rank-and-file is strong. His party standing is beyond question. There is little doubt of his ability to be a

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strong leader of the Parliamentary Labour party. It is the prime ministerial post that comes with the party leadership that is more often in question.

Callaghan's political thought has rarely deviated from that of the mainstream of the party. It used to be said in the Lobby of Parliament that you could tell when an issue was settled when Jim Callaghan got down off the fence. His inelegant style and cautious lack of commitment are emblematic of the old "muddle through" philosophy that has always worked for Britain—so far.

To Callaghan, his party is a base, a reliable and highly structured system; to Michael Foot, it is a movement compounded of the imperatives of principle and history. His moralistic approach to politics has always held him apart. Until entering the cabinet, Foot was the model of an effective backbencher. Michael Foot first entered the political scene as a writer. He was the editor of both the left-wing *Tribune* and the right-wing *Evening Standard*. He has written persuasive pamphlets that show the effect of British writers like William Hazlitt. He has also written a two-volume political biography of the visionary democratic Socialist, Aneurin Bevan. The work is an impassioned ode to a man whom Foot obviously revered. Since 1960, when Bevan died, Foot has been MP from Bevan's old Welsh constituency.

Foot is a man with rare political perceptions based in part on a profound romanticism that he quickly and cheerfully admits to. His is a complicated view of the political world; he is a Socialist and a democrat, yet does not conform to any model of social democracy. It is more abstract, less dogmatic. The sense of communitarian effort in the United Kingdom during World War II had a strong effect on Foot's concept of socialism. He saw Britain as a national body involved in a concerted democratic action aimed at freedom. His protests against nuclear weapons during the 1950s were largely based on his knowledge that any decision to use them would occur outside a democratic body. He has called unemployment "the greatest infringement of the liberty of an individual." Foot turned down a chance to join the cabinet in the mid-'60s because of his opposition to the British government's support of the Vietnam war. He finally took the post of secretary of state for employment in 1974.

Despite the legitimizing and usual defanging effect of government office in a cabinet system, Foot has managed to maintain his political nonconformity and, if the recent vote is any indication, his popularity. One reason for this is that he has never shied from either emotionalism or new ideas. Last year when some jobless steel workers in his constituency booed him down and called him Judas, he cried. It wasn't a large number of workers, but he still took their anger as a personal blow. Another unusual characteristic is Foot's wide-ranging intellectual interest. He is as at home with an analysis of Defoe or DeGaulle as with some arcane parliamentary matter.

For all of his unique qualities and brave ideas, Michael Foot truly excels only when he speaks in public. The man can really make a speech. He weaves and bobs about, his long white hair slapping all over his head, as he lets his convulsive eloquence rip. It makes you shiver. He can be crushing in debate and is usually quite powerful on television. But often he has trouble concealing his boredom when confronted with a weak opponent or interviewer. In 1954, his adversaries forced a pioneering BBC talk-show off the air because Foot's appearances so increased his following.

Jim Callaghan is also good on television. Whereas Foot would grind an opponent, like Tory leader Margaret Thatcher, under his heel, Callaghan would use the opportunity to shrewdly illuminate Thatcher's irritating and caustic manner. Callaghan's fatherly manner is assuring to the electorate. The Conservatives would never be able to plausibly accuse James Callaghan of turning Britain into an Argentina. Several MPs who would have been much happier to let Michael Foot scare a few people as prime minister concede that at least Callaghan, as opposed to the mercurial Harold Wilson, lets you know (on purpose or otherwise) what he's thinking. The difference is something like that between Johnson and Nixon. LBJ did some of *his* bullying in public.

What Michael Foot and Jim Callaghan will do with their new jobs is a mystery. The dangerously slim Labour hold on government will probably make both men wary of a major internal break. Foot will have to be privately assertive to the point of violence in order to lead his Labour dreamers into the role of builders. Last week, Foot cancelled a trip to the US as tensions rose over the inexorable fall in the value of the pound. Despite a massive $5.3 billion loan from a variety of Western nations and the vote by the militant miners' union in favor of the government's pay policy, Foot will continue to be pressured from all sides over the issue of cuts in public expenditure. His past work from the sidelines has left him quite vulnerable to charges of collusion in stringent government anti-inflation policies. He has found, as one of his exemplars, William Hazlitt, noted, that "though familiarity may not breed contempt, it take the edge off admiration."

The Mother Country, as Carl Albert called it on his recent visit here, is not imbued with a new spirit or new vigor because it has a new leader, because he is not perceived as new. Britain's problems are so boring and snarled that the public seems to have fallen into a dangerous state of resignation. The Rolling Stones were, after all, just passing through town as a gesture toward the poor country that they had abandoned long ago. Callaghan knows that he will have to do more than keep the Tories in opposition. Even the ephemeral goal of "uniting the Labour party" is only one thing. Something more fundamental has to happen here.

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Arts and Lives

Stanley Kauffmann on films

Le Coq d'or

At the end of *The Last Woman* (Columbia) the protagonist cuts off his penis with an electric carving knife.

Now let's go back to the beginning. I stated the conclusion at once because it dominates horribly any thinking about the film, but I have to state equally quickly that this is not a conventional horror or violence flick, that in fact it's a film of some interest, not less because it's one of a pair of related French imports.

Marco Ferreri is a talented Italian director in his late 40s who has recently been working in France. His last film was *La Grande Bouffe* (*TNR*, Oct. 13, '73), a celebration of gluttony and death-by-gluttony. His new script, which he wrote with Rafael Azcona and Dante Matelli, is about sexual gluttony—or so it seems, for a while. Then we see that it's really about male egotism.

It begins like an ode to physicality as a last Laurentian refuge in a mechanized world. The first shot, resembling the start of Antonioni's *Red Desert*, is of an immense complicated industrial plant. (Luciano Tovoli photographed well, but the print shown to the press was a disgrace.) Gerard Depardieu, the young actor seen before in *Going Places* and *Vincent, François, Paul, and the Others*, is an engineer at this plant. He is just off on holiday. Where does he go? He snuggles up right in his own apartment with his infant son and a beautiful teacher from a day-care center, Ornella Muti. (His wife has left him.) We get some idea of the film's tonality when Depardieu goes to pick up his child and finds the teacher pacifying—not suckling—the infant with her bare breast.

His apartment is in a huge complex, something like an immense industrial plant for habitation. Within this concrete-and-glass hive the apartment is a nest in which the two adults and the one-year-old child spend most of their time naked, all three often in bed together. A plot of sorts is developed involving Muti's not-quite-ex-lover (Michel Piccoli, reliably world-weary); Depardieu's noisy estranged wife (Zouzou of *Chloe in the Afternoon*); and two neighbors down the hall, a fellow-engineer and his sometimes accessible wife. But the plot is mostly a way of distending the picture—too far—as a container for scenes of skin and sex, interwoven by Ferreri with the neon world outside.

As those scenes continue, it becomes clear that, despite the woman's equal sexual appetites, they are less scenes of mutuality than of the man's bullying. He bullies with his penis, sometimes quite literally. This is the first film I've seen outside porno in which an actor was required to show an erection. (Brando's sex scenes in *Last Tango* were wrapped in crinoline compared to this film.) Depardieu becomes a prototype of male ego and domination, eager to take woman's sexual needs as proof that the domination is just and wanted.

Muti fights her sexual attraction to Depardieu as she gets increased knowledge of his character, which is only a less-upholstered version of Piccoli's character. Early in the film she runs off to Piccoli, then returns to Depardieu; later when she calls Piccoli again, he comes with a new girl and tells Muti he's willing to get another apartment for her. This, plus the attitude toward her of the raunchy married engineer down the hall, plus Depardieu's attitude toward the engineer's wife, plus Depardieu's attitude toward *her*—all of this behavior uncomfortably recognizable to the audience—finally drives Muti to a mad outburst in which she attacks Depardieu with a hammer. She is furious at herself of course, also at Depardieu's callous insistence that he wants no emotional commitments; and she is panicked by a sense that she is surrounded by ubiquitous egotistical male legislation in love/sex. They fight, and he bloodies her nose. (Much blood in the film. He cuts himself a couple of times while cooking; he always makes her lick the blood.)

Apparently, however, her rage and despair get to him. He sits alone, morose, at the kitchen table. Suddenly there is a big close-up of the electric knife on the table—and I groaned in anticipation. He swigs some wine as an anesthetic, then does the job. He howls and sinks to his knees. She comes out of the bedroom, the child in her arms, and stands still, watching as he holds out the severed member in penance. The camera recedes; the frame freezes.

Depardieu is beefy and ebullient throughout, singing when he isn't chattering, busy and imperious. He eats a lot during the picture. So do Muti and the child. She is exquisite, dressed or undressed. So, differently, is the child.

And Ferreri is accomplished. His control is casually sure, his editing—with city noises as his score—is suggestive. But as a scriptwriter he's worrisome. Two hours (almost) for this film is much too much, simply to justify that conclusion, which is what the film was written for. And that conclusion, even though it's fairly well grounded in Depardieu's impulsiveness, is so appalling that it breaks the "frame" of the film—it bursts out of the story to become an isolated atrocious act, the least watchable moment on the screen since Catherine Deneuve slit her landlord's throat in Polanski's *Repulsion*.

In his recent films Ferreri has been testing the limits of audience shock. His work hasn't been free of the taint of exploitation, but it's been based in bitter satire. Even in *The Last Woman* that's true for a great while. The stiff penis scenes, the sex play involving the baby, can be taken as a kind of sneering testament of freedom. But the ending was too much for me. I couldn't accept it as part of the picture. And since the picture was patently made for that ending, it shook what had been up to then an overlong but annoyingly true film.

What's remarkable further is that Ferreri is not the only male director now working in France who is concerned

Films Worth Seeing

All the President's Men. Admirable try with tough material for film. Anyway, we bring much of the excitement *with* us.

Face to Face. Liv Ullmann at her best, though not Ingmar Bergman at his, in this exploration of "normality."

One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest. Specious mental-hospital allegory, but Jack Nicholson is immense.

Robin and Marian. In the mood for romantic flapdoodle about a maturer Robin Hood? Anyway it's well acted and directed.

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with male chauvinism. Claude Chabrol, probably the most prolific director of consequence in the Western world, has just done a film on the subject. Moreover the central role in *A Piece of Pleasure* (Joseph Green) is much like the secondary role played by Piccoli in Ferreri's film.

Here the rich womanizer is played by Paul Gégauff, who has written or collaborated on many Chabrol scripts. The woman he lives with, and has had a child by, is played by his wife, Danielle Gégauff. He is lean, gray-haired, smooth, with what look like two glass eyes; but he has the attractive voice that seems a Frenchman's birthright. She has a well-sculptured face with fine gray eyes. Neither of them is outstandingly effective, though I'd rather see her again than him. (With her clothes on. She's no Muti.)

To the womanizer this woman is his creation, whom he has taught style and taste. She is so much his that he can wryly urge her to have affairs, as he has. She tries it, likes it, leaves him. Quickly he finds someone else and marries her, possibly to insult the earlier woman. Then he finds out that he really needs Number One and implores her to return. When she refuses, he gets sufficiently irked at her impertinence to murder her, at the grave of their child's nanny. His silkiness has been ripped by his male ego.

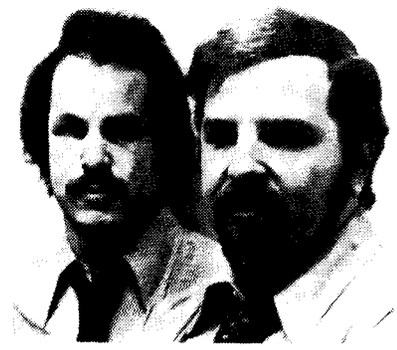
This ending (script by Gégauff himself) is much more digestible than Ferreri's—it's in the tradition of Musset's *No Trifling with Love* where a grim finish grows out of a polished comedy and paradoxically fulfills it, rather than cracking it like *The Last Woman*. Chabrol is one of the most fluent directors alive: film pours out of him like song out of a thrush, well-made even when the script is weak. *A Piece of Pleasure* is middling Chabrol, not consistently engrossing but incisive in its revelation of increasingly engorged male petulance.

Are new ideologies taking root in France? Two blasts at male egotism in one week from the land of oo-la-la!

Opera Chronicle

I Puritani, which the Metropolitan produced this year for two of its stars, Joan Sutherland and Luciano Pavarotti, is Bellini's last opera, which exhibits his developed powers not only in the melodic writing that attains its highest point in the aria "Qui la voce," but in its dramatically meaningful orchestral writing, and in the elaborating ensemble writing exemplified most impressively in the finale of the first act. While the peculiar timbre of Sutherland's voice below its bright high range, and the mannerisms of her phrasing, made her singing of sustained melody unattractive to the ear and musically unsatisfying, her florid singing was spectacular in its agility and accuracy, and her bright high notes dominated the climaxes of the ensembles impressively. Pavarotti's powerful voice has always lacked the sensuous warmth and ease of flow this music calls for; and though it rings out clearly in the recently recorded performance of *I Puritani*, it had an unpleasant rasp in the Metropolitan performance I attended. It was these flaws in the musical performance conducted effectively by Richard Bonynge that were disturbing on this occasion, not the stage production and dramatic performance: realistic scenery as imaginatively undistinguished as Ming Cho Lee's, and singing non-actors as ineffective as Sutherland and Pavarotti, in performance of dramatic nonsense like *I Puritani*, are the commonplace of opera that one relegates to the periphery of the attention focused on the music.

The Metropolitan's new *Aida* was another matter. It had special interest as the first production jointly conceived and carried through by James Levine and John Dexter, the team of musical director and production director newly created not only to work on its own productions but to make the necessary artistic decisions on all Metropolitan productions. I wrote last summer of the musical excellence one could hope for



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with Levine's appointment as musical director; and this excellence was achieved in large measure in the *Aida*. His conducting shaped the work with a feeling for the Verdi *espansione* controlled by a sense for plastic continuity and coherence in the progression of sound in time. And Leontyne Price, in the title role, astonished one with the beauty of her singing at this late date, except for the strident climactic high C in "O patria mia" and some unattractive sounds in the final scene; Marilyn Horne, the Amneris, sang with vocal sumptuousness and dramatic power throughout; and Bonaldo Giaotti was an impressive Ramfis. With these one could accept the constricted sounds produced by James McCracken, the Radames, and the singing of Cornell MacNeil, the Amonasro, that was dramatically effective, but sounded harsh at first and dry even when it became more agreeable.

Much of the time, however, one was distracted from the musical performance by the obtrusively innovative and damaging details of the stage production that represented the kind of re-creative thinking present-day directors and designers feel privileged to do about the composer's work and to impose on it in place of his own explicitly stated decisions concerning the dramatic scene and action. My additional hope last summer was that Levine, since he deferred to the composer's directions about the performance of the music, would want similar deference to what the composer specified about the staging, and would use his power of veto to prevent the sort of thing I have just described. But as it turned out, Levine spoke on several occasions of how Dexter and he, in their discussions, found themselves to be extraordinarily in agreement; and in a joint interview in the *Times* they revealed their agreement in the thinking they had imposed on *Aida*.

Ancient Egypt, in Verdi's mind, was only an exotic place which introduced an element of novelty into what he recognized was a hackneyed dramatic action and provided opportunities for spectacle to enliven it, and as such required no more than scenery and costumes which would represent that place to the eyes of the audience in the theater—in particular what he specified for the opening scene that would represent a hall in the king's palace in Memphis: the set of an interior with colonnades, statues, flowering plants, and a great door at the back through which one would see palaces, temples and pyramids. This, however limited, was all that Verdi needed and used for his musical drama, and all that audiences needed to be moved by it. But the ancient Egypt of *Aida* evoked in the minds of Dexter and Levine a great deal more that didn't enter the mind of Verdi: thoughts of intense religious and social pressures exerted by the priests in the rigidly ritualized society into which the Egyptians were locked; images of grandeur, gigantic scale, enormous space. These were valid as thoughts and images in the minds of Dexter and Levine; but translated into the concrete details of staging that the team introduced into Verdi's opera they were damaging and distracting. To show the Egyptians locked into a rigidly ritualized society the singers were locked into a rigid style of unnatural body pose and arm movement which, throughout the performance, one could not accept as having been employed by any Egyptians but the painted ones in museums. As for grandeur, Dexter and Levine insisted it was not attainable on a stage cluttered "with lots of papier-mâché icons" (in Levine's words), but required the bare sets that would convey an impression of monumental size and space; and so to the beginning of the opening scene the few characters carried on their exchanges not in the intimacy of a palace interior but in what looked like an enormous cavern in a mountain—this despite the Dexter-Levine claim to have staged *Aida* as the intimate opera it really was instead of the DeMille spectacular they said (incorrectly) it had traditionally been misunderstood to be.

There was much more of this sort of thing, which I don't have space for; and I will add only that with thinking concentrated on the insertion into the opera of what Verdi had not put into it, too little or no thought appeared to have been given to things he *had* put into it. Thus, Amneris' apartment didn't merely lack the traditional couch for her to recline on, as her attendants prepared her for the victory celebration, but provided nothing for anyone to sit on; which not only struck one as odd in itself but later produced the distractingly improbable result that instead of being seated in the center of the stage as the dancers performed for her she stood watching them from the side of the stage.

Inserted in the *Times* a few Sundays ago was a brochure with material about "the civilized sights and sounds of a national treasure" that the Metropolitan provided. A paragraph sub-titled *The Promise of a New Era* described how the company's tradition "has now been further enhanced by the talents of two extraordinarily gifted men," Dexter and Levine, who "together . . . have the eyes and ears to see and hear operas in innovative ways, plus the energy to bring them to unprecedented heights." But to me the Dexter-Levine *Aida* promises a continuation of the old era in which production teams' innovative ways of looking at operas have inflicted appalling damage on them.

Equally disappointing—to judge by the announcement for next year—is what the new era promises in repertory. The brochure's cover had a photograph of Martti Talvela in Moussorgsky's *Boris Godunov;* but actually this work will not be heard again next year—the reported reason being the one that caused the Metropolitan's board of directors to drop the triumphantly successful production of Berlioz's *Les Troyens*: that it is expensive to perform. But if money is available for next year's new productions of Meyerbeer's *Le Prophète*, Poulenc's *Dialogues des Carmélites* and Alban Berg's *Lulu*, I contend that it should be used instead for additional performances of the long unheard, and then too briefly heard, masterpieces of

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the 19th century's two great originals, Berlioz and Moussorgsky. To drop *Les Troyens* and *Boris* and use what they would cost for *Le Prophète, Dialogues des Carmélites* and *Lulu* is equivalent to the Metropolitan Museum's using its money to acquire not the Rembrandt *Aristotle* but works of people like Ad Reinhardt and Andy Warhol.

Explaining the new policy for next year's new productions, Levine stated the "categories of operas in which we should expand the repertory" as "First, basic 20th-century works . . . Second, acknowledged masterpieces that haven't been seen at the Met in many years . . . Third, less-played works by important composers. And fourth, new productions of standard works." The categories are the right ones, but wrongly applied. After 50 years my dim recollection of *Le Prophète* is that it is a work good enough to revive when money is plentiful, but not an acknowledged masterpiece whose claim to be heard is greater than that of *Les Troyens* or *Boris*. Berg's *Wozzeck* (which is in the Metropolitan's repertory) is one of this century's basic works, but his *Lulu*, is not—the difference being that the words and predicaments of *Wozzeck*'s characters are themselves moving, its distorted vocal writing heightens the effect of the words, and its discordant orchestral writing provides a suitably nightmarish context for the vocal declamation and the action; whereas *Lulu*, when the Hamburg Opera performed it in New York in 1967, left me uninvolved and even unbelieving, and I heard in the exacerbated vocal writing no relation to the words, in the orchestral writing no relation to the vocal declamation and the action. As for *Dialogues des Carmélites*, which the New York City Opera produced in 1966, its mellifluous writing had little musical interest or dramatic point. And I would have supposed that those recent performances of *Lulu* and *Dialogues* had sufficed to eliminate any need of their being presented again by the Metropolitan.

Nor is more sense for value exhibited in the rest of next year's repertory. Puccini rates the same number of operas as Verdi's three, and more than Mozart's two; and in place of additional Verdi and Mozart there will be even less valuable works than Puccini's by Giordano, Saint-Saëns and Massenet.

The hopes I expressed last summer must, then, be reduced: it now appears that the excellence to be expected of Levine will be only that of the musical performance he conducts.

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Books Considered

Celebrating the Duke by Ralph J. Gleason

(Atlantic-Little, Brown; $8.95)

Ralph J. Gleason, who died just last year, was the kind of critic who probably never really thought of himself as such. He was the great enthusiast of jazz, the man who, in that often bitterly sectarian world, was able to like—*truly* like—more different kinds and styles of music than others who wrote about it. His love of jazz modernists such as Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, Miles Davis and John Coltrane never meant for a moment that he felt it necessary to like Louis Armstrong any less.

He grew up with the music, getting hooked on it first through an adolescent case of the measles: ". . . in those days—the early '30s—when you had the measles they put you in a darkened room and you were not allowed to read. And so my mother let me have the Atwater Kent and I lay there, wide awake in the night, picking up those strange sounds in the night—Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong, Cab Calloway, Earl Hines, Fletcher Henderson."

These were his earliest heroes. He took their records with him to Columbia University, where for a while he wrote the jazz column in the *Columbia Spectator*. Once bitten, he continued to write ever afterward, and always on jazz—for *down beat*, the *San Francisco Chronicle*, among others, and finally for *Rolling Stone*. It was for the last that he found a unique role for himself as jazz's apostle to the great unwashed hordes of rock and roll. Without condescending and without patronizing, he presented jazz to them, explaining how their own music was related to it, sprang from it, and eventually might lead back to it. What he did best, however, in that *Rolling Stone* column he wrote for so many years, was to communicate his enthusiasm for that music he had grown up with.

His appreciations of various artists collected from these and a few other publications have provided the contents of this book, *Celebrating the Duke*. It is, more or less, the work of his lifetime, for Ralph Gleason was a journalist, and not especially a writer of books. He had done two previously—*Jam Session*, mostly tape-recorded, and *The Jefferson Airplane and the San Francisco Sound*, a paperback quickie which was in its way an act of conciliation with the readers of *Rolling Stone*, his showing them that down deep inside he was their kind of guy. *Celebrating the Duke* is something different. It is a collection of pieces, not just about Ellington—though over a hundred pages is given over to him—but covering a whole pantheon of jazz deities—Miles Davis, Bessie Smith, Dizzy Gillespie, Charlie Parker, Billie Holiday, and on and on. He calls them

"Heroes" in the heading to the section given to them. But the way Gleason writes about them here, often with such personal devotion, they seem almost as gods and goddesses to him.

While many writers assemble collections such as this between their *real* books, showing us the kind of journalism they do when they must, Ralph Gleason's approach to his jazz journalism was much different: he considered *it* his real work; anything that came between him and his pieces for various publications was merely an interruption. And I think the quality of the writing in the individual pieces here—especially on Armstrong, John Coltrane, and some of the many on Ellington—demonstrate the care he took with them. The occasions of journalism come and go and are eventually forgotten. Nobody was more aware than Gleason of the ephemeral nature of such writing, and nobody fought it with more energy and eloquence than he did. He even wrote album liner notes with the same care and sense of style that he did his columns and articles. And, quite appropriately, a few of them have been collected here. There are very few writers whose liner notes would bear re-reading—perhaps only one, Ralph J. Gleason.

As a writer about jazz—I find myself resisting to the last calling him a critic—his real genius was evocation. He could put you there and suggest through words the sense of that experience of listening and seeing as few other jazz writers (many with much greater erudition) could do. Here, for example, Carmen MacRae:

She stood there on the stage, a vision; Georgia Rose in the flesh, the burning eyes reaching right out across the rows of seats, the spotlight shining on her cheekbones, her hair thrust back a little as she sang "When Sunny Gets Blue."

And here, his presentation of the Ellington band:

An orchestra is a living, breathing, human thing, and despite the static nature of written music, what you hear with a group as individual as the Duke Ellington assembly, which is currently at Basin Street West, changes from night to night and from set to set.

No matter how many times you have heard a particular number, it is different by a shade of emphasis, a slight alteration of tone, or phrasing, even of lines, every time it is played.

There are a hundred such passages in *Celebrating the Duke*, some of them

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perhaps better than these two. The point is, that if they are good, they are so because of the distinct and very personal sensibility of the man who wrote them. He was there, and he heard it and loved what he heard; and writing about it, he wants you to love it, too.

And finally, nobody was better than Ralph J. Gleason at getting to the man—or woman—behind the music. His piece on Billie Holiday—a difficult, complex and perplexing woman—has made me, if not understand her, at least perceive her better than anything else I have read about her. The same could be said of his long obituary article on Ellington, an artist for whom he had much affection and respect. "Affection" was the operative word with Gleason, I think. It was always out of love that he wrote.

Bruce Cook

Bruce Cook is a free-lance writer and author of a forthcoming biography of Dalton Trumbo.

Eva's Man
by Gayl Jones

(Random House; $6.95)

Gayl Jones' first novel, *Corregidora*, was a small, fiercely concentrated story, harsh and perfectly told. It was about the arrangements between black men and black women, and also about heritage. Original, superbly imagined, nothing about the book was simple or easily digested. Out of the worn themes of miscegenation and diminishment, Gayl Jones *excavated* the disturbingly buried damage of racism. *Eva's Man* is a deepened exploration of the woman's inner life: of the pressures, the cruelties, the imposed expectations. Like the first work, part of the interest of *Eva's Man* lies in its having no relation to the polemical tradition of "Black Literature."

It hardly matters, in this novel, that Eva Canada is black. Structurally unsettled, more scattered than *Corregidora*, *Eva's Man* is extremely remote, more troubling in its hallucinations. This story is spoken—screeched or moaned would be closer to the tone—by Eva who is incarcerated in a ward for the criminally insane. She has murdered her man, Davis, and, worse, desecrated the corpse, committed necrophilia, bitten off his penis. The violence of the premise makes the flesh crawl. Everyone seeks to discover the motives for the hideous crime: her doctors, a cell mate, the homicide officials, perhaps even Eva herself. The personal exploitation that causes Eva's desperation is hard to appreciate. Her rage seems never to find its proper object, an adequate form of expression, except, possibly, in her last extreme act. The first novel concerned itself with a violently incestuous chronicle, a legacy of rape and abuse dating from Brazilian plantations; and these things make the pathological frigidity and inherited psychological damage of its heroine understandable. But Eva's terror is too deep, strangely recessed. Memory, here, assumes a shattering tyranny.

The men in this second novel complain of Eva's isolation, of her impenetrability. She constantly refuses to explain herself to the men she encounters. She is utterly unwilling to talk. Initially we see this as a defense against ruthlessness, but what is offered the reader is somewhat insufficient: the torment she suffers as a woman is not unusual, unfortunately, due to its frequency. No, this is not meant to depreciate the daily nature of a woman's pain; but not all women become schizophrenic, destructive. Both novels are relentlessly about fornication and sex, as an act, as a burden, central to the plot of existence, a dialogue between the deprived. The most private and reduced relations between the characters is all that is needed to indicate their social oppression. There is a continual sense of suffocation in these novels, as if their lives took place in a closet. The stasis and isolation are haunting. Locations are ignored: bus stops, taverns and cut-rate hotels all melted to a bleak, bare, unpaved texture. There does not even seem to be a white side of town. No doubt this is a source of the novels' power, as well as the distant and withheld quality of the heroines. The wife, a woman, is a matter of possession and property is always defined by the necessity for protection. Jealousy is a kind of aggression and Gayl Jones' novels are, finally, indictments against black men. The women are denied by convention what Angela Davis has called "the deformed equality of equal oppression."

The imbalances in *Eva's Man* are discomforting. Fixations with menstruation, erections, even the treatment of the characters' diets—scrambled eggs, onions, cooked sausage, cucumbers, cabbage, mustard, grease—create an aversion, repulsion, as if the sensual were not a relief from existences miserable and difficult, but a destiny bearing down without mercy. The skin of her neighbor in jail is covered with scabs. A man is missing a thumb. Women wear unnecessary amounts of perfume, cosmetics, jewelry. "You just sitting right on the pot and scared to shit." Odors leap up from every page. *Eva's Man*, then, is a tale of madness; one exacerbated if not caused by frustration, accumulated grievances. Girlhood is reduced to incidents of assault: little boys experiment on her with "a dirty popsicle stick," and demand she fondle their genitals; old men accost and intimidate. Poverty is not as evident in Eva's remembrance of New York slums as is another kind of scarcity—women and men in doorways, under stairs; lurid remarks; rape. "You think I'm gon bother you. I ain't gon bother you. I was just askin if you wont a ride. Shit." Puberty means a loss of immunity. Eva organizes a retreat from the rawness around her with silence. "You too serene." Or: "You frustrate a man." Her withdrawal is the only means she has of avoiding the insensate rituals of seduction; of fighting the assumptions of sexuality.

What Eva has learned is the problem; how her mind filters and then interprets experience. "Once you open your legs," Miss Billie said, "it seem like you caint close them." The women in Eva's childhood speak of someone called "the queen bee" and she is regarded with awe: the men who love her die mysteriously. Eva seizes on this woman as a symbol of retribution and apparently forgets the queen bee's suicide; or that, in spite of adulteries, beatings, the women around her are acquainted with love, however tattered. But we cannot find any sure origins that account for the monomaniacal concentration Eva brings to disfigured pictures of human need.

Eva stabs a man who makes advances and is sent to a reformatory when she refused to testify on her own behalf. Then she marries a man twice her age in the hope of finding security and a release for the tender impulses that would mute her anger. But he is too possessive and she is too removed from the domestic in temperament. Eva adopts the mobility of a man, the secrecy of the drifter, until she meets Davis with whom she lives

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scarcely a week; forbidden comb or any contact with the outside world. Eva is suddenly vengeful. She is as stunned as we are to recognize the desire to inflict injury has governed her life. The *paranoia* of this woman's soliloquy is reminiscent of some novels concerning homosexuals. Both Baldwin's *Giovanni's Room* and Vidal's *The City and the Pillar* end in murder, as if mutilated or troubled sexual identities had only the *grisly* as their fate. The lesbian overtones of *Eva's Man* are intriguing. Only the women seem capable of reflection, affection without completely impure motives. While they address each other in scorn and pity, they also show a tremendous intimacy and sympathy. Eva succumbs to the suggestions of her cell mate. "'Tell me when it feels sweet, honey.'/I leaned back, squeezing her face between my legs, and told her 'Now.'" This is not prison rape, the articulation of power. It is an indication of emotional requirements still unsatisfied—even after Davis' death; after attempting to purge herself of the brutality she has known under the weight of men. With her cell mate she has made a statement but her insanity makes her the only one in the audience to whom it is audible.

Gayl Jones places her heroines between victory and defeat where deprivation is a narcotic. Though they are women of intense and complicated feelings, their severity suggests an impasse. How does one sustain or add to the pitch of these books? There are hints of fragmentation and strain in the conception of *Eva's Man*. And there are risks in offering the novel as a form for poetic and violent tirades of the solitary self: the limitations of tradition are exchanged for the narrowness of inaccessibility. Opaque, flat, peculiar, in her fiction Gayl Jones has presented problems that are living, historical and important additions to the current American—not just black—scene. These novels are genuinely imaginative creations.

Darryl Pinckney

Darryl Pinckney is a free-lance writer in New York.

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The Balancing Act
ed. by Sydelle Kramer

(Chicago Review Press/Swallow Press; $4.95)

I found myself picking up this book when I ought to have been sleeping, taking it to the john with me, and thumbing through it at red lights. It has some of the charm of women's magazines, where one peers with embarrassed fascination into other people's lives. In it, five professional women talk about the problems and pleasures they found in combining motherhood with a career.

The authors—Jayne Curley, Sharon Ladar, Linda Matthews, Anna Siegler and Jane Stevens—constitute an atypical sample of humanity: all are between 30 and 35, married and living with their husbands. None have been through more than one pregnancy (although two have twins). All are white, well-educated and potentially affluent. All work either at the arts or at writing (although two have other professional commitments as well). Not all readers will share their world or their attitudes toward work, time, money and other important issues. Nevertheless, I learned a great deal from these essays.

I learned, first of all, that in spite of the women's movement, in spite of the very real changes in the family expectations of a particular class of couples entering parenthood, motherhood is still a very different proposition from fatherhood. Mothers are usually the ones who feel guilty about having more paid child care. Mothers are the ones who talk to other mothers about problems of parenting and problems of combining baby care with work. Mothers are exhausted by tiny babies—especially the first—to a degree that fathers rarely are. Mothers are, I think, more aware of the ways in which parenthood has changed them.

I learned, in addition, how extraordinarily vulnerable we all are to the *zeitgeist*. Those who feel guilty at not meeting traditional standards are matched by those who feel guilty for not meeting counter-traditional standards. The women in this group whose households run most traditionally—with mothers taking responsibility for child-care and fathers for family income—feel somewhat defensive about their arrangements. The women who work the most and share parenting most completely with their husbands have a certain moral edge. This is understandable: hard work is impressive and those who have succeeded in working out shared roles have a sense of breaking new ground on the edge of a frontier. Still it is depressing to see the price paid for liberation.

The fact is that most of this generation of women—my generation—is caught in a double bind: our culture and upbringing have taught us that we are principly responsible for our children, while the real insights of the women's movement have led us to want meaningful work and a compelling involvement with the outside world as well. We cannot always have both: one author remarks that there are times when she feels that "in combining motherhood with a career I am missing out on the best parts of both."

It is very hard for people to listen to their own needs, to find out what really does help to make them less miserable and more productive, as opposed to what ought to. It is especially hard for women going through motherhood for the first time. They must cope with the seemingly boundless demands of young children, the needs of their husbands, the pressure of work, and the expectations of parents and friends. Mothers complain in these pages, as elsewhere, that neither time nor energy remains for meeting their own needs, or even figuring out what they are.

The best thing about these essays is their diversity. The women are similar in many ways, yet as they worked together on the book, and lived through the early years of parenthood, their ideas moved somewhat apart. Sharing parenting worked well for some, but proved unsatisfactory or impractical for others. Their priorities are clearly different, with one placing husband and children ahead of her own intellectual needs, another speaking of fluid, shifting priorities, a third claiming that the major focus of her mental attention is with her work. Reading these ruminations, struck by the honesty and perceptiveness of the authors, I can only conclude that people really are very different; despite the pressures of friends, the *zeitgeist*, and politics, they are able to see and respond to these differences, and to work out lives in which the tension of conflicting pulls is bearable and often even enriching. Each feels love for her children; they enrich her life, her self-knowledge, and her spirit. All are ambivalent about parenthood at times, but optimistic on balance. At a moment in history when 70 percent of one set of replies to Ann

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Landers said that they were sorry they had had children, this is a fact worth noting.

This is not only inspiring, it is also helpful. Seeing these women, and feeling with them the pressure to be all things to all people, cannot help but increase the reader's awareness of the pressures to which his or her parenting style responds. To be aware of these pressures is a first step in deciding what sort of response is really best.

None of the authors have children over four years old. As time goes by, as parenthood changes, some of the issues raised in these pages lose their salience. (With three children, for example, I no longer worry about whether people think of me as a mother or a professional: yet I can remember a time when this mattered to me—as it does to these women.) As the first child grows older and is joined by others, conflicts come to seem more specific and personal to the people involved. Unbearable tensions are resolved in favor of less work, more child care, more sharing, or lower standards on some front. The unresolved problems become more familiar. Unless they are written down, many of the special and intense concerns of early parenthood are forgotten. For this reason, *The Balancing Act* can be enormously useful to those contemplating parenthood, or seeking in retrospect to understand its effect on their lives.

Helen Featherstone

Helen Featherstone teaches in the education department at Harvard.

Radclyffe Hall At the Well of Loneliness by Lovat Dickson

(Scribner's; $7.95)

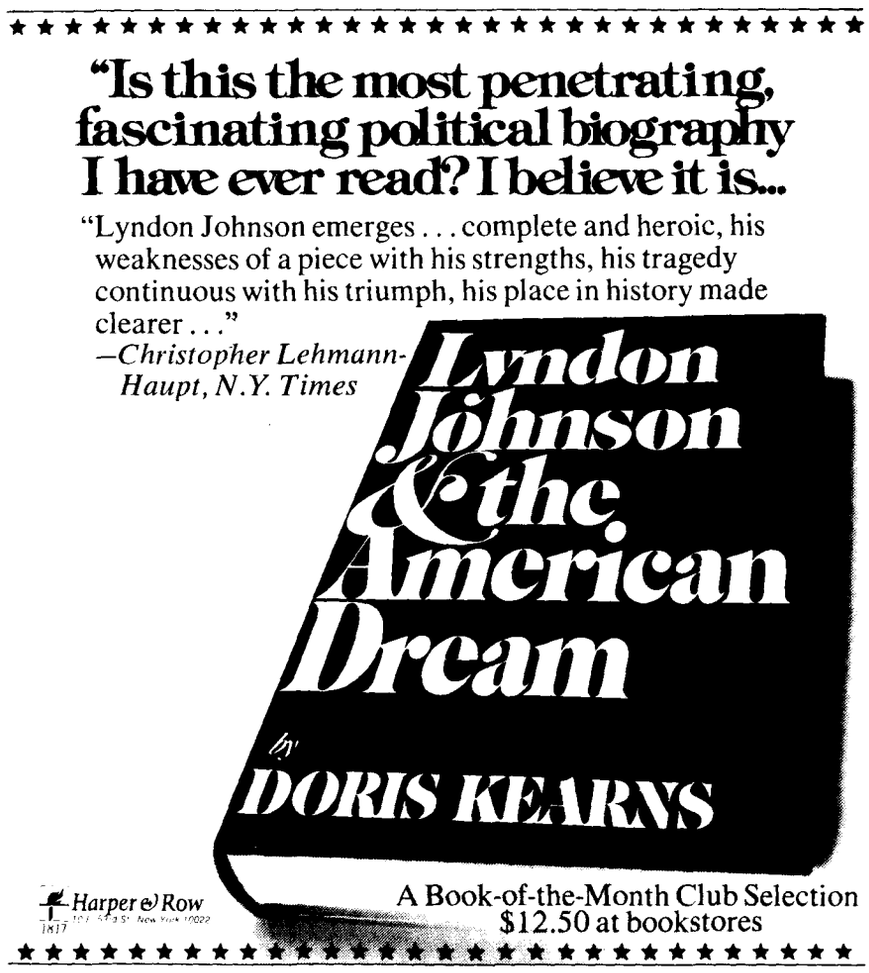
Radclyffe Hall was a homosexual poet and novelist, whose historical importance rests on her decision to make her homosexuality public, most dramatically in a thinly disguised autobiographical novel, *The Well of Loneliness* (1928). Lovat Dickson, for many years an important figure in the English publishing world, has written an intelligent and sympathetic account of her life, and especially of her three-decade-long relationship with Una Troubridge. It is a fascinating story, although not without its reactionary and disheartening twists.

Radclyffe Hall considered herself a congenital invert, a conception that had been lent scientific respectability by her friend Havelock Ellis in *Sexual Inversion* (1897). Along with Ellis she maintained that society had no right to condemn individuals who, by nature, could not act other than they did and who, in any case, brought society no harm. It was a simple message, but presented with utter sincerity, and though perhaps slightly stale for us, doubtless served a progressive purpose at the time of the book's appearance.

One comes away from Dickson's account wishing Radclyffe Hall had done nothing more than write her novel and fight her good fight with hidebound magistrates and duplicitous publishers (Dickson gives an expert insider's view of the book's publication history, in which, among others, Blanche and Alfred Knopf played conspicuously unheroic roles). For she was in many respects a disagreeable human being, who lacked the integrity and the ideological consistency one expects in a true revolutionary.

Indeed, aside from her sexual idiosyncrasy, she adopted a style of life largely indistinguishable from that of other members of the British upper class. She worked only when she wished, spent a great deal of time entertaining or being entertained, changed houses like most of us change clothes, traveled incessantly, and failed to see any connection between society's mistreatment of homosexuals and its mistreatment of other individuals or groups. Save on this particular matter she found nothing in the social and political order of early-20th-century England with which to quibble. Thus despite the obvious sexual affinities, she had little in common with her contemporaries in Bloomsbury, with whom, in retrospect, one might mistakenly be inclined to associate her. Bloomsbury, for all its preoccupation with subjectivity, stood for artistic and political seriousness. Radclyffe Hall was serious only about sex.

She was also a strikingly unmodern figure. For example, she became a devout Roman Catholic and fretted a good deal about the sinfulness of her infidelities, notably her nine-year affair with Eugenia Souline. One would have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thought that her fidelity would have caused her no less theological discomfort, since monogamous lesbianism hardly gets higher marks from the Church than does lesbian promiscuity. But the alliance with Lady Troubridge seems to have caused no pangs of conscience.

What did cause pangs of conscience was her long-standing involvement in various spiritualist enterprises. Most important among these was the effort to communicate with her first lover, Mabel Batten, who died shortly after the affair with Una Troubridge began, leaving her with a substantial burden of guilt. She employed her own medium, whom she paid handsomely, and for a while she engaged in joint psychic investigations with William Butler Yeats. The Church of course took a dim view of these activities, which, along with her Catholicism itself, seem entirely out of keeping with her role, in *The Well of Loneliness*, of sexual liberator.

Even in the sexual realm her contribution was not unambiguously progressive. In fact much of her behavior served to confirm the popular stereotype of lesbianism. She created an appearance for herself that was self-consciously mannish, "with short-skirted tweed suits, a collar and tie, . . . and man-like Heath hats." She also constructed a relationship with Una that was a parody of the butch-fem dichotomy commonly associated with lesbianism. Una was the devoted servant, who tolerated her spouse's neglect and unfaithfulness because that was her natural role. Not surprisingly, Una is the more interesting figure in Dickson's narrative. Long-suffering wives make better reading than do boorishly ambitious husbands.

And yet she did write the book, and she did go to court to fight for its publication. Dickson returns to this theme again and again, as well he might. It is the ultimate justification for his own lively and readable book, and it also makes us willing to overlook her personal and intellectual shortcomings.

Paul Robinson

Paul Robinson is author of *The Modernization of Sex: Havelock Ellis, Alfred Kinsey, William Masters and Virginia Johnson* (Harper & Row).

The Georgia Review

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Reconsideration

Cane by Jean Toomer

Jean Toomer's *Cane* has been reissued in a new edition—the first since its original publication. This is as it should be since *Cane*—our major piece of Afro-American writing—is still unknown to most American readers, and although it has been available in a paperbacked edition since 1969, no hardbacked edition has existed for library use. When Toomer's novel was originally published by Boni and Liveright in 1923, it sold barely 500 copies in spite of its favorable critical reception. In 1927, there was a second small printing—and then the book was unavailable until 1967 (the year of Toomer's death) when the University Place Press brought out a third small printing. That was before the Black Studies explosion, however, so the book was generally ignored by librarians and scholars. Hopefully, the new Liveright edition will correct this.

Toomer's biography is as unusual as the printing history of his masterpiece. He was born in 1894, in Washington, DC, of racially mixed parentage. He attended public schools in Washington, later spending several semesters at a string of universities—never, however, completing a degree. In 1920, he taught briefly in the South, in a school in Georgia, returning there in 1921 for a trip with Waldo Frank. In the mid-to-late '20s, after the publication of *Cane* Toomer dabbled in psychology, underwent Jungian psychoanalysis, and spent time at the Gurdjieff Institute at Fontainbleau.

A privately published collection of definitions and sayings, *Essentials*, appeared in 1931, by which time Toomer was having little success with editors and publishers. They misdirected him—recommending among other things that he not write about black people—and Toomer himself did not seem to be able to decide about whom he should write. He was married twice to white women (his first wife died in childbirth) and then, about 1934, Toomer, like the main character in James Weldon Johnson's *The Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man* (1912), decided to let the world take him for whatever it would:

> *I finally made up my mind that I would neither disclaim the black race nor claim the white race; but that I would change my name, raise a moustache, and let the world take me for what it would; that it was not necessary for me to go about with a label of inferiority pasted across my forehead.*

In short, Toomer passed for white (though without changing his name), moving later to Bucks County, Pennsylvania, with his family, where he continued to write for the rest of his life, though his publications were by and large limited to religious tracts for the Society of Friends. His death in 1967 was unacknowledged.

Toomer's novel has confused readers primarily because of its form—

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beginning with a dispute as to whether the book is a novel or not. Besides an unusual mixture of poetry, prose and drama, Toomer employed a number of techniques used by subsequent experimenters of the novel's form: stream of consciousness, developed primarily by the use of interior monologue; multiple points of view; disruption of the temporal element; alteration of the traditional unities of plot, character and setting. Many readers have regarded the work as little more than a series of short stories or vignettes, intermixed with lyrical poems and concluding with a play called "Kabnis." Darwin T. Turner, who has written the introduction to the new edition of the book, argues that *Cane* is not a novel because Toomer never regarded the book as such. (He has perhaps forgotten about similar statements made by Sherwood Anderson and William Faulkner, writers with whom Toomer shares a natural affinity.) Yet, Robert Bone included discussion of *Cane* in *The Negro Novel in America* (1958), as have almost all subsequent critics of black fiction.

Certainly, *Cane* is not a typical novel. It is, in fact, *sui generis*—a unique piece of writing in American literature as well as in the entire scope of Third World writing. I suggest that *Cane* should be regarded as a lyrical novel—a narrative structured by images instead of the traditional unities. Its tripartite structure is developed from a series of thematic tensions: North/South; city/country (with the almost ubiquitous image of the land); past/present; black/white; male/female. Structured by these counterparts or tensions, *Cane* achieves a lyrical beauty and power which make it, for me, the most compelling novel ever written by a black American writer.

The first part of *Cane* is composed of six prose sections and ten poems. The time is shortly after World War I, the setting is the South, and the concentration is, for the most part, upon a number of women: Karintha, Becky, Carma, Fern, Esther and Louisa. Except for the last of these, the women's names are used as titles for the individual sections. Almost all of them have led frustrated lives. All of the male/female relations recorded here leave something to be desired, two of them ending tragically for the men involved. Although these women are usually stronger than the men in their lives, they achieve little satisfaction from their roles. Furthermore, all of these stories take place in the dead of night, in darkness or at dusk—the implication being that black people are free to act and be themselves only after the sun goes down. The darkness liberates them, but it can also destroy them. These images of darkness and dusk (also developed in many of the poems in this section of the novel) establish a major tension, creating a nightmarish world of frustration and violence. They are important because they depict a race of people living on the fringes of reality, repressing the horrors of the past and the realities of the present. The future, Toomer implies, will be a continuation of these frustrations unless the black man comes to grips with the realities of his past, rooted as it is so horrendously in slavery and its tragic aftermath.

The aftermath of slavery is presented even more chaotically in the second part of Toomer's novel (seven prose sections, interspersed with five poems), in which we see the results of the Great Migration. Here the emphasis shifts from the South to the North, to Washington, DC, and Chicago, during and after World War I. As a counterpoint to the first part, the focus is mostly upon black men and the crippled lives they lead in industrialized Northern cities. While most of the stories in the earlier part take place in the natural world of cane fields and pine forests, most of the stories of the second take place inside of buildings which confine man's natural yearnings. Toomer appears to believe that the black man is better off in the South than in the North. The poems, again, reiterate these common themes.

The setting shifts back to the South in "Kabnis," the third part of *Cane*. Some readers have referred to "Kabnis" as a novella, others have called it a play. My own feeling is that it was intended to be a movie scenario. Whatever, there are stage directions, occasional lines of poetry, and movement in and out of the main character's mind. Characteristically, much of Kabnis' story is set in the darkness of night. At the beginning, we see him alone in his cabin, frightened by the noises from the darkness outside. He longs for his home in the North, from where he feels estranged. The scenario ends several days later, at daybreak, after Kabnis and two of his friends, Halsey and Lewis, have spent a night with two women in the basement (known as the "hole") of Halsey's shop. During the night, Kabnis renounces his color, identifying with his white-skinned ancestors. Hidden away in the "hole" Halsey keeps an old man, an ex-slave, whom Lewis refers to as Father

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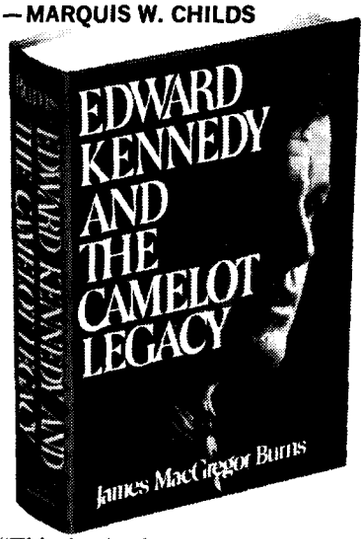

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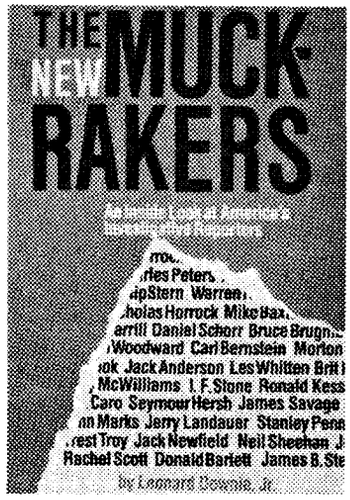

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John. Kabnis and Halsey both ignore the old man's preachings, thus renouncing their history and their color; Lewis identifies the man as his source.

The most fascinating aspect of Toomer's novel for me is not the correspondences that one can draw between Kabnis and Toomer himself but the narrator-observer who wanders throughout the book. This is the author's emotional center, for the fact is that *Cane* does have a central character—a figure who resembles Toomer himself, though cleverly disguised. In the course of the narrative he undergoes a number of metamorphoses, sometimes appearing as a first-person narrator (in 12 of the 28 sections of the first two parts), that is, as a participant in the activities described; or as an observer in a third-person narrative, like Conrad's Marlow. In two other main sections ("Bona and Paul" and "Kabnis") Toomer has disguised himself as the mulatto who cannot decide whether he should be black or white, thus introducing the theme of passing. *Cane*, then, may be regarded as the story of Jean Toomer's own vacillation between races—a rather common theme of American fiction during the 1920s.

In "Song of the Son" (one of the early poems in the novel), Toomer sets forth his symbolic position as that of the recording consciousness of a race of people before its past is forgotten. He speaks of the poet's duty to his people, before their history is forgotten. Before the sun sets on the aftermath of slavery, he will record this heritage on paper; that is, he will write *Cane*. He emphasizes that even though the sun is setting "on / A song-lit race of slaves, it has not set." One seed from the past has survived and that seed will become

An everlasting song, a singing tree,
Caroling softly souls of slavery,
What they were, and what they are to me,
Caroling softly souls of slavery.

It is, of course, one of the great ironies of Toomer's life that his book fulfilled his artistic intentions though Toomer himself was unable to accept this heritage. One suspects that the publication of *Cane* must have acted as a kind of exorcism, bringing Toomer's own identity problems to a climax. Like his alter ego, Ralph Kabnis, Toomer's personal vacillation between black and white damaged his own psyche beyond repair. Darwin T. Turner is correct when he says that in the end Toomer did not identify himself as a Caucasian any more than he did as an Afro-American, that he was "self-exiled from all races." *Cane* was his swan song, yet if Toomer in the long run was unable to accept his mixed heritage, there is little doubt that *Cane* has made it possible for others to find theirs. (The last scene in the novel—a symbolic sunburst surrounding Father John and Halsey's younger sister, Carrie Kate—is, in fact, a resounding affirmation of blackness.)

The novel, however, remains. Its influence on subsequent black writing cannot be denied—especially on the writers who wrote during the last years of the Harlem Renaissance, in the '20s and '30s. Yet its significance is much more than this, for *Cane* is one of the most innovative works of 20th-century American fiction—a landmark in American literature, foreshadowing the soon-to-follow experimental works of John Dos Passos and William Faulkner. The experimental novel in America begins not with those writers but with Jean Toomer's *Cane*.

One final note. In the first printing of *Cane*, there were three different circular markings or arcs—one at the beginning of each section of the novel. By some string of accidents, the first of these has been inadvertently omitted from all subsequent printings of the novel—including the new Liveright edition. Toomer considered these designs integral to his novel, and they have variously been interpreted as male and female symbols (ying and yang) and as signs representing the sun and the moon. When they are superimposed on top of one another, they do not form a complete circle as some readers have suggested, but, rather, a circle not quite whole, which relates, once again, to the novel's central theme: the instability of black lives, the unfulfilled nature of their existence because of the inability to understand the past. Whatever their intention, one cannot help but feeling that these designs also hold the secret of Toomer's own enigmatic life.

Charles R. Larson

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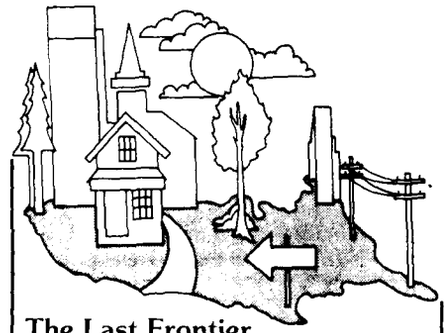

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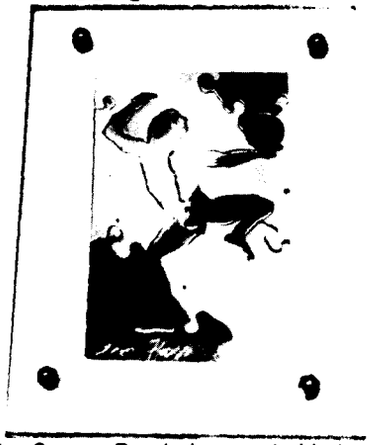

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IBM Reports

Depersonalization and the computer

Most of us can't help feeling nostalgic for an earlier, simpler era when most of life's dealings were face-to-face.

But chaos would surely result if we tried to conduct all of our dealings that way today. There are just too many of us. We are too mobile. The things we do are too complex—and the pace of life too fast.

It would be hard to imagine using credit cards or confirming airline reservations, for example, without the help of computers. Yet undeniably, dealing with each other, often at great distance, with machines as intermediaries has brought with it an element of depersonalization that none of us welcomes.

Still, there are compensating benefits.

By handling routine matters routinely, computers free people to deal personally with exceptional cases—and to provide individual attention that is swift and informed.

Thoughtful computer users are programming special consideration into many computer-assisted transactions. For example, airline reservations systems can quickly arrange to meet the requirements of passengers who need a wheelchair or a special meal.

In classrooms, computer-assisted instruction permits students to make progress at their own pace, enabling teachers to give more individual attention.

And in hospitals, where personal attention is critical, computers are relieving nurses and doctors of much administrative detail, giving them more time to spend in caring for their patients.

In spite of such benefits, there is no question that giving individual attention to individual needs becomes increasingly difficult with each passing year. The real question, of course, is whether we all care enough to try.

Many organizations which use computers have shown that they do recognize the need to preserve these values and are doing something about it.

For our part, we at IBM are trying to help through the development of products that make it easier for computer users to deal with people as individuals.

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